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THE

CORRESPONDENCE

OF

LEIGH HUNT.

EDITED BY HIS ELDEST SON.

"What if some little payne the passage have,
That makes frayle flesh to feare the bitter wave?
Is not short payne well borne, that brings long ease,
And layes the soule to sleep in quiet grave?
Sleepe after toyle, port after stormie seas,
Ease after warre, death after life, does greatly please."

SPENSER'S "FAERIE QUEENE."

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

20107 a

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CONTENTS.

SECTION.

VII. LETTERS FROM KENSINGTON . . . page 1

Correspondence with T. B. Macaulay, Mary Shelley, T. N. Talfourd, Lord Melbourne. Letter to the Queen. Correspondence with Southwood Smith, Macvey Napier, Francis Jeffrey, Thomas Moore, W. J. Fox, Jacintha Hunt, Vincent Hunt, J. W. Dalby, G. J. De Wilde, Charles Ollier, "J. F.," G. E. Anson, Lord John Russell, Walter Savage Landor, Horace Smith, Hon. Mrs. E. J. Stanley, Rev. Francis S. Mahony, Robert Bell, Thornton Hunt, R. H. Horne, Edmund Peel, William Allingham, Mrs. Procter, Alexander Ireland, Miss Planché, William Moxon, Horace Twiss, Duke of Devonshire, Arthur Gliddon, Marianne Hunt, George Bird, Mrs. Swift, Ann Gliddon, Percy Hunt, Joseph Fearn, and Lord Leigh.

VIII. LETTERS FROM HAMMERSMITH . . p. 164

Correspondence with Percy Hunt, "J. F.," Walter Leigh Hunt, Charles Ollier, Edmund Ollier, G. J. De Wilde, J. W. Dalby, Robert Bell, John Hunter, George L. Craik, Miss Craik, Edmund Peel, Sir F. Pollock, B. W. Procter, Mr. and Mrs. Browning, W. Story, Edwin Boucher, Southwood Smith, Bryan C. L. Hunt, Margaret A. L. Hunt, Julia T. L. Hunt, D. L. Richardson, Isaac Latimer, J. B. Buckstone, Lady Shelley, Frederick Locker, Marianne Gliddon, James T. Fields, Alexander Ireland, Thornton Hunt, Benjamin Moran, Jacintha Cheltnam.

APPENDIX . . . . . p. 315

Correspondence with Robert Chambers, Egerton Webbe, and Robert Bell.

THE

CORRESPONDENCE OF LEIGH HUNT.

LETTERS FROM KENSINGTON.

In 1840, Leigh Hunt removed from Chelsea to Kensington. The reader already knows that the residence near the river, although not without its hopes of good to come, and its solaces for actual misfortune, had been one of great and increasing trouble. Some of the pains have made themselves understood, others are not to be told. Chelsea was associated with some of Leigh Hunt's dearest recollections; but there was a sense of darkness hanging over the place; and when his affairs took a more favourable turn, he was glad to get away. He moved to higher ground, and to a less confined neighbourhood. The spot he chose was Edwardes Square, in Kensington, and there were several reasons for the choice. He always had a preference for "the old Court suburb." His eldest daughter was living at No. 45 in the same square, with her husband, John Gliddon, one of Leigh Hunt's most esteemed and devoted friends. I had myself lately resigned an engagement in Glasgow, to find one in London, and I had arranged to take a house in the neighbourhood with my double brother-in-

law, for we had married each other's sisters, and had been companions, schoolfellows, and workfellows from childhood to the day of his death, sharing each other's fortunes and thoughts, without a single word of mistrust or difference in the whole forty years. Edwardes Square is in itself rather peculiar. It is of some size; but makes no pretensions to magnificence. At each end, there is a row of houses with gardens in front; the south side is bounded, I think, by the stables of Earle's Terrace, which is itself the boundary to the north, with a front looking on to the main road, and the back gardens towards the square. Instead of being levelled, the plot of ground used as the garden of the square had been left with its natural undulations,—very slight, but sufficient to diminish the formal look; the truly garden-like aspect of the place being increased by some happiness in the original design and a good selection of the plants. Leigh Hunt soon found out that the square and its garden had been planned by a Frenchman, to whom he was emphatically grateful.

Here he resided for eleven years: a period of great industry, and upon the whole of much more success than he had enjoyed for a long time. He arrived while still flushed with the success of *The Legend of Florence*. Through the intervention of Macaulay, he obtained access to write in the *Edinburgh Review*,—a publication whose managers would at one time have thought the founder of the *Examiner* too Radical in his opinions, while he would have thought it too exclusive to feel at home in it. And I may here make a correction of the false estimate which was formed of Leigh Hunt's opinions on political affairs. It has been supposed that he entertained "subversive" ideas, was desirous of "pulling down," and was "democratic" and "levelling" in the policy which he would have promoted. No misconcep-

tion could be greater. The mistake originated partly in a characteristic of his political writings which must be regarded as a deficiency,—a want in his writing of substantive propositions, an absence of what are now called "practical measures;" but still more in the fact that his study of history, including that of our own country, his convictions, and above all his feelings, prompted him to be the antagonist of the party in power during the Tory *régime*. He thus stood before the public as the opponent of persons who happened to be in authority; and their advocates in the press, most falsely, imputed to him an invidious dislike of authority itself. This aspect of oppugnancy was increased by another circumstance, which could only be understood by his most intimate friends. He conscientiously believed it to be his duty to shield his independence, by avoiding even the proximity of all that might have been thought to influence it; and thus he not only repelled overtures of friendly compromise from his warmest political opponents to which I have already alluded, but declined invitations from distinguished persons on the Liberal side, especially when they belonged to the Whig party or to courtly circles. There were several reasons for this shrinking. He held that judgment should be formed on the intrinsic merits of every public question, unqualified by any sense of personal regard or convenience. He thought that if he were to become too much "mixed up" with those who were naturally expecting political office, he might be drawn into an acquiescence in party views which he deemed to be essentially wrong.

His own views may be thus stated:—Tory principles are the relics of an obsolete, kingly, and soldierly despotism, which, when he began political life, was vainly struggling against the natural progress of civiliza-

tion in general, and of the British constitution in particular. Among the members of the Whig party, there was no want of intelligence or of conscientiousness; but they lived in exclusive circles, and thus contracted habits of thought which narrowed the sympathies, and subjected the individual judgment to conventional doctrines, devised for the convenience of party leaders, and the accommodation of party followers. The policy resulting from these habits of thought was naturally exclusive in its tendencies, and those who obeyed it were reluctant to consult the impulses of their own heart, or to repay the support which they received from the great body of the people, by studying the aspirations struggling amid the humbler classes. If Leigh Hunt had been called upon to frame Acts of Parliament embodying his opinions, I believe that he would have entered upon the task with the most generous resolve to extend political privileges, till they ceased to be privileges at all; but he would have shrunk at the suggestion of every doubt, whether particular provisions might not do more harm than good; he would certainly have refused to be the responsible author of any sudden change; and, in short, I believe he would not have gone faster than any other reformer of his day. But Nature, and the course of his studies, had filled him with a conviction that feeling should be much more consulted,—far more reverently and avowedly consulted than it is, in public as well as in private affairs. He admitted his natural inaptitude to deal with any question as soon as it became formally set forth in the technicalities of a Parliamentary Bill. He was so faithful to his reliance upon feeling rather than the letter of laws that, although he did not join in the conventional disclaimer of the Regicides, whom he always lauded for performing a stern duty with firm fidelity,—he repeatedly expressed his

repugnance to Cromwell, and the hard fashions of the Puritans; contrasting them, in tones of affectionate admiration, with the generous and chivalric character of Falkland. These were the grounds on which he declined invitations to visit Holland House, just as at one time he declined the advances of popular actors, whom it was his office to criticise. It will be observed that, blended with the sense of independence, there was also a strong jealous mistrust of the sway which personal sympathy exercised over him; and there was, I think, another motive which he would have been the last to suspect. He piqued himself upon the "address" with which he was prepared to encounter strangers of all orders, on the most sudden demand; and his self-satisfaction was not unwarranted, since, however he might be taken by surprise, he never was without the kindest feeling, the readiest play of ideas, and the most critical sense of fitness. But he had rather an awful sense of his responsibilities on such occasions, and was somewhat anxious on the score of the fitness aforesaid. Upon the whole, he preferred the society of his books, and of familiar friends, who would make no such trying demands upon him. It was not "bashfulness;" it was not even what is called a "retiring disposition;" still less what our admirable friend Hazlitt called his "foppishness;" but, probably, it was the direct effect of a natural modesty which was very marked in his character, exaggerated by the influence of the reaction produced upon his ultra sympathetic impulses by the non-response and misconception with which they had been met in earlier life. All these influences combined tended to make him, who was fond of society, and was popular when he ventured there, more and more of a closet man.

It was from the closet that he looked forth upon public affairs by the light of history and of poetry, taking

those affairs to heart with a very unusual personal interest, ready to follow his forefathers in any sacrifices for principle, but coyly holding aloof from participating in any public administration. His conscientious habit of studying whatever he wrote about made him familiar with the history and discussion of public affairs, so that he handled them with an appearance of mastery which he himself repeatedly, and justly, disclaimed. But the information and vigour with which he talked imparted great force to his writing; and as his sympathies were warm, he did not seem to share the caution and reserve of responsible statesmen so much as he did in reality. The demagogue was a character which he despised, and he was never more annoyed than when similarities of name sometimes caused him to be confounded with notorious agitators. As I have already shown, the principles and measures which he advocated were those which have since come in fashion. Hazlitt used to say that after Leigh Hunt, and himself, and their like, had done the rough work of the battle for Liberal opinions, the gentlemen of the Whig party "put on their kid gloves" to finish the business, and carry off the honours. At no time were Leigh Hunt's opinions subversive; it might have been more just criticism to call them in great part ideal; but by the period of his life at which we have now arrived his once advanced opinions had merged in the received commonplaces—only the repute that he had acquired for over-liberalism was still supposed to characterize him, and it derived some countenance from the continued and perhaps increasing idealism of his conversation.

Probably these personal traits became better known to the ruling minds of the period. Although he was never very intimate with Lord Macaulay, I can see many evidences that the great Whig writer had acquired an

insight into Leigh Hunt's character, with a proportionate esteem for the man, and interest in his fortunes. This is partly due to direct intercourse; but I cannot avoid ascribing much of it, perhaps the largest and certainly the earliest share, to the unceasing exertions of John Forster. For many reasons, I abstain from verifying this conjecture; and my father's faithful friend will first read these words in print. But I believe I am very near the truth when I say that it is to the unwearied thoughtfulness of John Forster, and to the deliberate and strongly formed convictions of Macaulay, that Leigh Hunt mainly owed the pension which was granted to him in 1847. I am well aware that it would not have been obtained without the powerful aid of Lord John Russell, of whose friendship Leigh Hunt was very proud. And he never lost a lurking hope and belief, unconstitutional as the idea was, that he owed no small part to the individual kindness of Queen Victoria. "Let all your acknowledgments," says Macaulay, in a letter, dated June 26th, 1847, "be to the Queen and to Lord John. Indeed, your real benefactor is Lord John. The Pension Fund is absolutely at his disposal; and he selected you from among twenty people whose claims were pressed on him by different solicitors. He ought, therefore, to have the undivided credit." I subjoin a couple of letters from the same hand:—

War Office, 6th March, 1841.

Dear Sir,—Your letter of the 16th of February has this moment been put into my hands. It finds me surrounded by estimates and pay lists—things much less agreeable than the comedies of Congreve or than your criticisms on them. I am afraid that my answer must be short. I will only say that the good-will which I expressed towards you was perfectly sincere, and that if I used any expression which could either

give you pain, or affect your interests unfavourably, I am exceedingly sorry for it. If I should be able to find a few hours in the midst of official and parliamentary business, for Vanbrugh and Farquhar, assure yourself that I will bear your wishes in mind.

I am quite sensible of your claims on the party to which I belong; and I will say, without any circumlocution, that I have a real desire to serve you. At the same time, my power is very small. My patronage is confined to clerkships, which would suit only boys; and district-paymasterships, which can be held only by military men. The demands of a hundred and forty thousand constituents also press heavily upon me. The power of granting pensions resides with Lord Melbourne, who is not so much of a Mæcenas as might be expected from his fine understanding, his numerous accomplishments, and his kind nature. To get anything from him for a man of letters is almost as difficult as to get a dukedom. But if a favourable opportunity should offer, I will see whether anything can be done.

In the meantime I should be really glad if you could point out any mode in which any interest which I may possess might be of use to you.—Believe me, dear sir, your faithful servant,

T. B. Macaulay.

War Office, 24th March, 1841.

My dear Sir,—I am glad to find that, in accusing the age of injustice towards you, I was myself guilty of injustice towards the age. The truth is that having been, when a young fellow, a very constant reader of the writings of my contemporaries, I was on a sudden plunged into politics. I then went to India. Since my return I have been engaged in English politics again. The time which I have been able to spare for study has been chiefly given to old writers; and I scarcely ever open a periodical work or a book of any kind which is less than twenty years old. My notions of contemporary literature still are what they were in 1828; and I may

thus very easily fall into great mistakes as to the standing and the mutual relation of men of letters in 1841.

It would really give me very great pleasure to be of use to you. I have already spoken to Lord Melbourne about you. He listened, as he always does, very kindly; and seemed to me to entertain the proposition which I made more favourably than I had ever seen him entertain any proposition of the sort. I will bring the matter under his notice again.

I have only time to add, that it would give me very great pleasure to make your personal acquaintance. During this busy season I can scarcely hope to get as far as Kensington. But I am here every day; and if you should happen to come into these parts to see the National Gallery, or to look at the new building which Barry has erected for the Reform Club—a building worthy of Michael Angelo—I shall be truly glad if you will look in on me.—Yours, very truly,

T. B. Macaulay.

War Office, 27th March, 1841.

My dear Sir,—I have just had a long conversation with Lord Melbourne, on whom I have pressed your claims with as much urgency as I thought myself justified in using. I have not time to give you particulars, some of which would be curious and amusing. At last he told me that he feared a pension was out of the question, but that he would try to do something for you. This is less than I wished, but more, I own, than I expected.

I assure you that your letter has affected me much. I am sorry and ashamed for my country, that a man of so much merit should have endured so much distress.

I heard the other day, from one of poor Southey's nephews, that he cannot live many weeks: I really do not see why you might not succeed him. The title of Poet Laureate is indeed ridiculous. But the salary ought to be left for the benefit of some man of letters. Should the present government be in office when a vacancy takes place, I really think that the

matter might be managed.—Believe me, my dear sir, yours very faithfully,

T. B. MACAULAY.

Before Leigh Hunt received the Royal Pension, he received, in 1844, another grant. The son of his friend Shelley had attained to the family title and patrimony, and believing himself to be carrying out the wishes of his father, Sir Percy Shelley spontaneously set aside 120*l.* a year, which Leigh Hunt enjoyed for the remainder of his life. The two following letters refer to this event:—

Putney, 20th April, 1844.

MY DEAR HUNT,—The tidings from Field Place seem to say that ere long there will be a change; if nothing untoward happens to us till then, it will be for the better.

Twenty years ago, in memory of what Shelley's intentions were, I said that you should be considered one of the legatees to the amount of 2,000*l.* I need scarcely mention that when Shelley talked of leaving you this sum he contemplated reducing other legacies, and that one among them is (by a mistake of the solicitor) just double what he intended it to be.

Twenty years have, of course, much changed my position. Twenty years ago it was supposed that Sir Timothy would not live five years. Meanwhile a large debt has accumulated, for I must pay back all on which Percy and I have subsisted, as well as what I borrowed for Percy's going to college. In fact, I scarcely know how our affairs will be. Moreover, Percy shares now my rights; that promise was made without his concurrence, and he must concur to render it of avail—nor do I like to ask him to do so till our affairs are so settled that we know what we shall have—whether Shelley's uncle may not go to law—in short, till we see our way before us.

It is both my and Percy's great wish to feel that you are no longer so burdened by care and necessity; in that he is as

desirous as I can be; but the form and the degree in which we can do this must at first be uncertain.

From the time of Sir Timothy's death I shall give directions to my banker to honour your quarterly cheques for 30*l.* a quarter; and I shall take steps to secure this to you and to Marianne if she should survive you.

Percy has read this letter, and approves. I know your *real* delicacy about money matters, and that you will at once be ready to enter into my views; and feel assured that if any present debt should press, if we have any command of money, we will take care to free you from it.

Anxiety we shall not have, for neither Percy nor I will allow ourselves to be *anxious* where matters of delicacy or necessity are not concerned, but worry and business enough we shall have.

I believe we are going into Hampshire on Monday. When we return we hope to see you, and Percy will call to see how you are, and I hope find you all better.—With love to Marianne, affectionately yours,

MARY SHELLEY.

Serjeant's Inn, 18th May, 1844.

MY DEAR HUNT,—I cannot help writing one line to tell you —no, I cannot tell you—how heartily glad I am of your realizing the blessing intended by the great and good spirit who was so prematurely snatched from you. I feel, in some faint degree, how much it must sweeten and endear the comforts secured to Mrs. Hunt and yourself to know that they are the accomplishment of one of the million generous desires of Shelley's heart—a practical embodiment of that poetry which was lost to this world just as it was becoming happily associated with its realities.

As I cannot in person give you my little book, I send it by post. Do not trouble yourself to acknowledge it, as I know full well the kindness with which you will receive it.

Our birthday—which you cannot this year gladden—will be on Thursday, 23rd, not Wednesday—a mistake not so im-

portant as it might have been if you had been able to join us; though I mention it that we may feel your sympathy at the right hour.

Hoping soon to be able to shake you by more than ever your old imagining hand, I am ever yours,

T. N. TALFOURD.

The writings which were produced during Leigh Hunt's residence at Edwardes Square were, various articles for the *Edinburgh Review;* the *Palfrey,* 1842; the volumes of Selections from the English Poets illustrating the qualities of *Imagination and Fancy,* 1844, and *Wit and Humour,* 1846; the small edition of his own poetical works, 1844; *Men, Women, and Books,* 1847; *A Jar of Honey from Mount Hybla,* 1847; *The Town,* 1848; *A Book for a Corner,* 1849; *Autobiography,* 1850; *Table Talk,* 1851. In 1850, was set up a new publication, with a revived title, called *Leigh Hunt's London Journal;* but there was not a very thorough understanding between the co-partners in the enterprise: it did not last long, and I fear did not prove satisfactory to any of its projectors. The subjoined note refers to the *Palfrey.*

TO LORD MELBOURNE.

(*Apparently a rough draft.*)

I was once speaking to Mr. Fonblanque of my disinclination to trouble your lordship, then Premier, with a request to lay my tragedy of the *Legend of Florence* before her Majesty, and he told me that he was sure your good-nature would not have been displeased with it. This is the reason why I now venture to ask whether a similar kindness might be done the accompanying little poem, supposing no etiquette to stand in the way of it? I have no fear of being supposed by your lordship to approach one who is no longer Premier with less respect than when he was in power. I would even venture to say, if

the mode of testifying it were not so free a one, that it is in a double spirit of respectfulness the application is made. Should it be of a nature calculated to give your lordship any perplexity, I can only plead as to the occasion of it, and beg it may be laid to the result of an ignorance which lives very much out of the world.

Your lordship will perceive that an address to her Majesty, as having ventured to ask her favour, does neither presume to call itself a dedication, nor leave the public under any erroneous impression whatever as to its pretensions. And on this as well as other accounts, I not only expect, of course, no acknowledgment of its receipt on the part of any one about her Majesty's person, but shall be more than content to understand by your lordship's own silence the book has reached its destination, and therefore not been considered altogether unworthy of it.

The booksellers tell me that it is no longer "the mode" for authors to beg acceptance of their volumes *bound;* but in regard to books intended to go to Court, they are not quite so sure; and I own I find it so difficult to disassociate the idea of dress from any such proceeding, that I trust my inexperience in this respect also will be pardoned.

I have the honour to be, my lord, your lordship's ever obliged and most obedient servant,

LEIGH HUNT.

TO HER MAJESTY.

Kensington, 15th July, 1842.

MADAM,—A sentiment of gratitude, in addition to the admiration felt for your Majesty's cheerful and liberal nature, has often impelled me, in newspapers and other periodical works, to address verses to your Majesty, which I did not presume to bring otherwise under the Royal notice. Of late only have they ceased,—stricken mute by the audacious absurdities which have astonished and humiliated the nation, and for which the new and degrading mode of contempt with

which it is proposed to treat them is truly the only fitting animadversion.

The little poem accompanying this letter being of size enough to make a book, so far increases its importance as to have induced me to venture to inscribe it to your Majesty, not in an express dedication, much less in any manner implying the permission to do so; and therefore it looks for no such honour as any kind of notice from the Palace. The author will only be but too happy if he shall be enabled, through the kindness of Lord Melbourne in forwarding it, to conclude that it may possibly amuse, and has at all events not offended, your Majesty's princely good-nature.

With deepest respect, your Majesty's most faithful and devoted subject and servant,

LEIGH HUNT.

FROM LORD MELBOURNE.

South Street, 22nd July, 1842.

SIR,—I beg your pardon for not having before answered your letter of the 15th inst. Mr. Fonblanque did me no more than justice in assuring you that I should have been at all times ready to lay any work of yours before her Majesty. Since I have been out of office, I have been solicited by many to render them the same service, which, for obvious reasons, I have hitherto always declined. From respect, however, for your literary talents, I will not persevere in this determination in your case, but will take care that the copy of your work, which I have read with great pleasure, is transmitted to the Queen.

It is a very pretty, lively piece, and contains many very quaint and clever passages. In the concluding paragraph, you have made Sir Guy and Sir Grey leave all they possessed to Sir William, long before any man in England could make a will of landed property at all.

I remain, sir, yours faithfully,

MELBOURNE.

FROM LORD MELBOURNE.

South Street, 10*th August*, 1842.

SIR,—I have been guilty of neglect in not before noticing yours of the 24th inst.

I am very sensible of the fairness of your conduct with the gentleman whom you mention—the editor of a Tory newspaper. At the same time, the imputation is one of those which, perhaps, do not signify much, and which I have always found it useless either to contradict or explain. If you state what has been done, they will only vary the form of attack, and say that it was niggardly and insufficient, and almost worse than nothing: in which they may, perhaps, have some reason.—I remain, sir, yours faithfully,

MELBOURNE.

TO SOUTHWOOD SMITH.

Kensington, 22*nd July*, 1840.

MY DEAR DOCTOR,—What shall I say to *myself*, for saying No to you?—yet I must. And assuredly it is far more saying No to myself, considering the many good things I deny myself, from venison (to which, by the way, if you will not think it ungrateful of me, I prefer mutton), up to the sight of all the souls in your faces. But the play! the play!—I shall be immersed in it till the end of next month, and then I will issue forth, and come to Montague-street the first thing (I promise it), and dine with you all immensely.

Be kind enough to bear in mind, that I went to Mr. Swynfen Jervis's that day, only because I was obliged to fail an engagement with him on a former one,—and that I go nowhere at present, not even to dinner with my very neighbours. Ask the dear Gillieses, nevertheless, to love me a little bit still; and do you do so, much; and Horne, and Powell, and all generous ultra-considerate friends. And may you have as much health as you give a hundred other people.—Ever your affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

To Macvey Napier.

32, *Edwardes Square, Kensington,*
5th May, 1841.

Dear Sir,—Will you have the goodness to tell me by what time you should like to have the article on the Colmans, and to about what length you should wish it to run?

My kind friend Mr. Macaulay, who does me nothing but good and generous offices, has given me great pleasure in telling me of the cordiality with which you have welcomed my reception into the *Review;* of which, indeed, I had not been without an intimation from yourself before. I should be unable, on such an occasion, not to fill up the present bit of paper; but I am labouring under such a severe attack of cold and bile, with sore-throat, bad head-ache, and other "amenities" (as an Italian called them), that it is painful to me to stoop my head never so little over my writing.—Dear sir, I am your most obliged and faithful servant,

Leigh Hunt.

From Macvey Napier.

Edinburgh, 23*rd June*, 1841.

Dear Sir,—You have made a very agreeable article, interspersed with good remarks and just criticism, on the account of the "Colman family." I am quite certain that it will be liked, for it is of a kind to recommend itself to both sexes, by its anecdotes, its pleasing information, and the easy flow of its style. I beg to give you my best thanks for it.

Were I to make any particular remarks, it would be on the last paragraph. There is no philosophy, and no use, in depreciating an age, because it had not a Homer, or a Shakspeare, or a Bacon; and you must excuse me for omitting a critical sentence, at variance with the lengthened tenor of the *Review*, —that which makes nothing of either Hume or Gibbon. Both open a volume of mind of far greater amplitude than any other historian of the ancient or modern world; and it seems

to me, therefore, quite wrong to characterize their age as barren of any everlasting works. But this by the way. Assure yourself that I am desirous of your continued assistance, on subjects where you feel yourself at home; and I hope that you will find it advantageous to follow the colours under which you have thus enlisted. I shall tell Mr. Macaulay, who comes here to be re-elected, and dines with me on Friday, how much I like your first contribution. I say this, because I know that he is very much your friend.

How would Campbell's *Life of Petrarch* suit? He is a friend, and must respectfully be treated, on *every account.* You may think of this, till I write you again, which I shall do the moment the number is *published.*—Believe me, dear sir, truly yours,

M. Napier.

To Macvey Napier.

Kensington, 25th June, 1841.

My dear Sir,—Your letter has given me great delight; the more so, inasmuch as I wrote to you myself yesterday, begging you to make what omissions, at any time, you pleased; and it was only owing to the very anxiety in which I wrote, that I did not specify that passage in particular, to which you so justly object. My own mind had so misgiven me upon it, that in thinking what consolations I could get, in case the whole article dissatisfied you and were rejected, one of them would have been the non-appearance in print of that identical passage! Judge, then, how you have more than pleased me, by approving the article in general, and at the same time anticipating my own objections. I pique myself, you must know, upon being a proper Macaulayite in these matters, a cosmopolite in literature,—and doing justice, as far as I can, to the claims of all its ages; so that I had gone counter to my own principles; besides being ungrateful to my old friends Hume and Gibbon, one of whom I reverence for his goodness, as well as his placid depth of reasoning, while the other is one of my repeated recreations. I say all

this, in order that you may not apprehend any future trouble with me, of the like sort.

Dear sir, the whole of your letter is very kind; and not the least welcome passage in it, is that in which you tell me that you will state your approval of it to the friend, the mention of whose name gives me an emotion of tenderness. I longed to be one at your table, when you spoke of his being about to dine with you; and now, while I am writing this, in the middle of the day of the dinner, I am thinking that *you* are thinking of the pleasure of expecting him.

I should like, of all things, to write upon Petrarch, if all the good things which I can conscientiously say of Campbell, would reconcile him to my difference of opinion with him as to the amount of Petrarch's greatness as the man wanted by his age, to the passion for Laura *as an inoculation of sentiment also wanted by the age, and by the sensual Italian people.* At present, I know the book only by extracts in the newspapers. At all events, be sure that I should treat the biography with the greatest respect, and your judicious pruning-hook would be in readiness, in case I seemed to pass the bounds of it, out of an exuberance of sympathy with my old Tuscan delights. Petrarch was not so great as Dante; but there has been a tendency of late, in consequence of the discovery of that truth, to undervalue his nightingale muse, with the lesson which it taught of faith in love; and it seems to me high time, and a good opportunity, for a bit of reaction on that point. And it would be the more novel, and show its sincerity the better, by reason of our very respect for Mr. Campbell. However, you probably see farther than I do into all these matters, and may think the subject safer in other hands. I had thought of the subject, when I saw the book announced, and also of a new book (if it *be* new) of the *Life and Letters of Samuel Pepys*,—that Sancho Panza of high life in the days of Charles the Second. But I will look out for a longer list of new publications; I need not say how glad I shall be to hear further from you respecting a subject, in case the Petrarch will not do. It is, more than I can express,

my interest, and fortunately will be my pride and pleasure, to contribute to the *Review* as often as you may think fit; and I must not conclude this letter (scrawl, I am afraid, I must *latterly* call it) without more particularly saying, how much editorial handsomeness there is in the unstinted measure of kindness with which you have received my first communication. I am truly sensible of it; and hope you will find I am so, in the zeal with which I shall serve under your banner.—I am, dear sir, most sincerely yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

Kensington, 21st October, 1841.

DEAR SIR,—I received the bill yesterday, and should have written to say so by return of post, but was so tired with writing, I fairly gave it up. Have you any objection, in case I can find some *chatty* subject, more or less after the fashion of my last, to postpone the article on Petrarch to another quarter? My anxiety to do it justice makes me ask the question; for, in the first place, I am very hard driven with theatrical matters, and in the next, I wish to leave nothing about Petrarch unknown to me, or, if possible, unread. I want to read all his Latin as well as Italian books, and I find it difficult immediately to procure them. I cannot get even the Abbé de Sadé's life of him, except in the poor abridgment of Mr. Dobson; and my health allows me to go to the Museum, to consult books, but not to read them, day by day. Now, between this and Spring, I would contrive, somehow or other, to find these books, as well as ample time for digesting them; and then my Petrarch article (as far as I could make it so) would be what it ought to be. What say you? and shall I immediately look out for some other *piquant* subject, and send you (if I can) a list of such? If I ever make an objection, pray understand that I do it in the gayest tone in the world, and full of the greatest sense of your own good-will and good-nature. The reason of divers omissions which you made struck me directly, and I was glad you made them; and the addition which you made was quite right and *grace-*

ful on the part of a *Scotsman*, though it might not have been so proper for an Englishman to repeat the scandal; but you substituted your modesty for what would have been my frontless claim to knowledge on the subject, when you made me say you didn't know what took Pepys into Scotland; for, you see, I know all about that matter, as well as all his other proceedings, and it committed (a little bit) the dignity of the excessive sense which you must know I entertain of my great industry and particularity ! ! And so, committing this remark to your future good-natured consideration and present hearty laugh,—I am ever, dear sir, faithfully yours,

L. H.

P.S.—Mr. Macaulay's article is, indeed, literally what you call it, "most magnificent." It does the greatest things. It has made the greatest impression upon me of any article I ever read. Excuse scrawl from a hand half-palsied with weeks of incessant work.

FROM MACVEY NAPIER.

Edinburgh, 25th October, 1841.

MY DEAR SIR,—I readily agree to the postponement of the article on Campbell's *Life of Petrarch* till March; trusting that it will be ready by that month for the number of the ensuing one. Any further delay I should not like, as the book would get stale, and would be considered as not worthy of a review. If you see any reason to think that you may not be ready by that time, I would rather wish you to resign the subject, as I have had more than one offer to take it up. It would be a pity, however, to lose the reading you have already (as I believe from former communications) bestowed upon it; and it is, therefore, to be hoped that you will be able to complete your task by the appointed time, and, further, that you will do your best upon it.

As to an intermediate short article, of an amusing description, for next November, I should really very much like one

of some ten or twelve pages at most, to intermix with graver matters; but your phrase "chatty" rather alarms me; for, to say the truth, and that in the most friendly spirit, the prevalence of colloquial expressions—nay, of some that are positively *vulgar*, in the style of an accomplished scholar, who, too, has written many admirable, some exquisite verses—has exceedingly surprised me, and made me sometimes apprehensive of the durability of our connection. But the circumstances just alluded to, as strongly indicating your *capabilities*, make me think that the defect mentioned has been owing to your being accustomed to write, and write rapidly, for periodicals where correctness of phraseology was not much missed. I think, too, that the pressure upon your time obliges you to write without careful *revision;* for, were you to go over your composition carefully, you would discover inelegancies and repetitions, which your own taste would dash away in a moment. For example, the paltry word "bit" occurred above a dozen times, nay, in almost every page, in your last article. Now, my dear sir, if you should think that what I have above written proceeds from any overweening disposition, or from any other than an anxious wish to be of some little use to a man of great attainments, who has been but scurvily treated by the world, you would do me a great wrong. I am sure you have better sense, and it is in that confidence that I have so written. To return to a short article for January: if any book or subject occurs to you, on which you could write an article of the above-mentioned length, in an amusing but gentlemanlike tone and style, I should be delighted to hear of it, and will immediately say whether the proposal is such as I should like. In writing me, if you please, make no reference to the preceding part of this letter, but use it as you may think it deserves, and limit yourself to *business;* for both you and I have enough to do. With my best wishes, believe me, dear sir, truly yours,

M. Napier.

To T. B. Macaulay.

Kensington, 27th October, 1841.

My dear Sir,—After the kindness with which you have consented to advise me on matters connected with the *Edinburgh Review*, I will not apologize to you for asking if you will be good enough to tell me what I had better do, *or not do*, with the enclosed letter from Mr. Napier. I trust I have irritated him somehow—in some way for which I cannot account, unless it be in the cheerful and hearty endeavour I have made to avoid all cause of offence; for I should be loth to think I had written things in my articles, as he pretty plainly intimates, not merely vulgar, but unlike a gentleman! If he were an Irishman, instead of a Scotchman, I suppose he would think it necessary for one of us to call the other out! The only possible way in which I can imagine myself to have offended him—and I should not have thought that possible, but for the tone of the present letter—is in having expressed a laughing regret (for I took particular pains to request he would understand me as writing in the most cheerful tone, and as if bantering my own objection) at having made me say that I did not know what took Pepys to Scotland; the truth being that I knew all about it, and was intimate with every part and particle of his history, and can affirm that my mention of this objection arose a *great deal more* from my wish to appear industrious in his eyes, and anxious for the mutual honour of the character of the *Review*—for precision, than from the least wish to find fault with himself; of which, indeed, I have not an atom. As to his thinking such words as "bit" vulgar, and his not knowing how to discern animal spirits from want of breeding, &c., they are mistakes which I should not wish to characterize by his own phraseology; but, indeed, not being personally acquainted with him, and at the same time being in a delicate position with regard to his authority in the *Review* (between the tone and nature of his objections and my own——I must get the word out—poverty), I feel fairly at a loss in what way to answer him. Is he a

very quarrelsome, or (an awful word to think of for an editor of the *Edinburgh Review*) a very dull man?—for I know not his writings, and, unless self-love blinds me, his letter looks very like it. At all events, he has succeeded in making my position in the *Review* very uncomfortable, which you, dear sir, had made so pleasant; and if it were not for the anxieties which my house contains, I should certainly take the first good-humoured opportunity (for more people in the world need not be pained than can be helped) of availing myself of the not very well-natured alternative which he is so quick to set before me, with regard to my continuance or otherwise in his list. Light as the article on Pepys seems, and in one respect is, I took a great deal of pains with it, for the sake of the *Review* as well as myself; and hearing what I have since heard of it from others, it appears somewhat hard Mr. Napier should select this moment for such a letter as he has written me. In the article on Colman there were seventeen mistakes of the press, some of which, I hope, may have occasioned his observations about inaccurate phraseology, for they certainly made me say a good many absurdities; but I did not enumerate them to himself nor send them as *errata* to the publisher, greatly because I thought it would hurt his feelings (for circumstances induced him to undertake the revision of the proofs). With regret, dear sir, at giving you this trouble,—I am ever most truly yours, LEIGH HUNT.

Mr. N. gives me leave (you will observe) to make no reference, *if I please*, to the worst part of his letter; which is amusing enough and very *dramatic*. It is as if a man, in the course of a speech to me, were to give me a thump in the face; and, when he had done talking, say, "You need not take any notice of that thump."

FROM T. B. MACAULAY.

Albany, 29th October, 1841.

MY DEAR SIR,—I do not wonder that you are hurt by Napier's letter, but I think that you a little misunderstand

him. I am confident that he has not taken any part of your conduct ill, and equally confident that, by the expression *gentlemanlike*, which certainly he might have spared, he meant not the smallest reflection either on your character or manners. I am certain that he means merely a literary criticism. His taste in composition is what would commonly be called classical,—not so catholic as mine, nor so tolerant of those mannerisms which are produced by the various tempers and trainings of men, and which, within certain limits, are, in my judgment, agreeable. Napier would thoroughly appreciate the merit of a writer like Bolingbroke or Robertson; but would, I think, be unpleasantly affected by the peculiarities of such a writer as Burton, Sterne, or Charles Lamb. He thinks your style too colloquial; and, no doubt, it has a very colloquial character. I wish it to retain that character, which to me is exceedingly pleasant. But I think that the danger against which you have to guard is excess in that direction. Napier is the very man to be startled by the smallest excess in that direction. Therefore I am not surprised that, when you proposed to send him a *chatty* article, he took fright, and recommended dignity and severity of style; and care to avoid what he calls vulgar expressions, such as *bit*. The question is purely one of taste. It has nothing to do with the morals or the honour.

As to the tone of Napier's criticism, you must remember that his position with regard to the *Review*, and the habits of his life, are such that he cannot be expected to pick his words very nicely. He has superintended more than one great literary undertaking, — the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, for example. He has had to collect contributions from hundreds of men of letters, and has been answerable to the publishers and to the public for the whole. Of course he has been under the necessity of very frequently correcting, disapproving, and positively rejecting articles; and is now as little disturbed about such things as Sir Benjamin Brodie about performing a surgical operation. To my own personal knowledge, he has positively refused to accept papers even from so

great a man as Lord Brougham. He only a few months ago received an article on foreign politics from an eminent diplomatist. The style was not to his taste; and he altered it to an extent which greatly irritated the author. Mr. Carlyle formerly wrote for the *Review*,—a man of talents, though, in my opinion, absurdly overpraised by some of his admirers. I believe, though I do not know, that he ceased to write because the oddities of his diction and his new words compounded *à la Teutonique* drew such strong remonstrances from Napier. I could mention other instances, but these are sufficient to show you what I mean. He is really a good, friendly, and honourable man. He wishes for your assistance, but he thinks your style too colloquial. He conceives that, as the editor of the *Review*, he ought to tell you what he thinks. And, having during many years been in the habit of speaking his whole mind on such matters almost weekly to all sorts of people, he expresses himself with more plainness than delicacy. I shall probably have occasion to write to him in a day or two. I will tell him that one or two of his phrases have hurt your feelings, and that, I think, he would have avoided them if he had taken time to consider.

If you ask my advice, it is this. Tell him that some of his expressions have given you pain; but that you feel that you have no right to resent a mere difference of literary taste; that to attempt to unlearn a style already formed and to acquire one completely different would, as he must feel, be absurd, and that the result would be something intolerably stiff and unnatural; but that, as he thinks that a tone rather less colloquial would suit better with the general character of the *Review*, you will, without quitting the easy and familiar manner which is natural to you, avoid whatever even an unreasonably fastidious taste could regard as vulgarity. This is my honest advice. You may easily imagine how disagreeable it is to say anything about a difference between two persons for both of whom I entertain a sincere regard.—Believe me, dear sir, yours very truly,

T. B. Macaulay.

To MACVEY NAPIER.

4th November, 1841.

MY DEAR SIR,—I should take great shame to myself for not having answered your most kind letter yesterday by return of post, had I not been going out on business which I could not avoid, at the very moment I received it. Extreme occupation, of the most anxious kind, has also deprived me of a grace, in my not having been the first to write a kind word, the moment Mr. Macaulay (who has taken the trouble to stand arbiter between us, which he has done to perfection) told me I must have misconceived the strength of your expressions. Believe me, my dear sir, that when a man under any circumstances, or almost in any manner, tells me he is sorry for having hurt my feelings, *my immediate impulse is to think that it is* MYSELF *who must have been in the wrong.* Judge therefore what it is, upon the receipt of your very kind, and considerate, and warm-hearted letter; which has not only taken away all the unfounded uneasiness I had begun to feel in a connection which had so much pleased as well as profited me, but made me aware of a secret reservoir of sensibility and sympathy existing under the indispensable business-like habits of the editor, and ready to flow over, on proper occasions, to the delight of my perhaps ultra-enthusiastic turn of mind (for if I had begun to fancy you too northern, you might reasonably enough have concluded me to be too southern). Pray fancy for me that I have said in this short and unavoidably hasty letter, *all that you could have wished me to say, whether regretful or thankful*, and believe me, dear sir, your entirely relieved, most obliged, and most faithful servant,

LEIGH HUNT.

P.S.—I will do my best to please you in point of style, and in a few days will write again relative to new books and subjects. The Petrarch (unless it should ultimately convenience you to wish otherwise) I think I had better give up,

for fear *my necessities* should *absolutely not allow me time* to do justice to the previous reading *necessary to my conscience* for it; which special reasons I state, in order that you may not think I could ever give you any *trifling* reasons. Once more, thanks and all kindness.

Edwardes Square, Kensington,
27th July, 1842.

My dear Sir,—After your last communication, my pen was, of necessity, diverted for a time to other quarters; but it is now again at the service of the *Edinburgh Review*, if you are still as willing as myself to see it employed in that direction. I saw Mr. Macaulay yesterday, and he thought that you would neither be sorry to hear from me, nor disinclined to the subject I formerly proposed,—that of Madame de Sévigné. She is an acquaintance of mine, of many years' standing; I may almost say, of daily conversancy; and I would propose to make the article consist of characters, *en passant*, of the principal persons of the time,—a comparison of herself, as a letter-writer, with Horace Walpole, Bussy Rabutin, Madame du Deffand, and others,—and above all, a more distinct and biographical account of her than has yet appeared in any *Review* (to my knowledge), giving the whole as light but well-bred a *manner*, with as much solid *matter*, as lies in my power. If this suit you, will you be good enough to tell me whether the article could go into the forthcoming number (which would be a great convenience to me); and if so, on what day you would like to have it; and to what extent I might write?

I have requested the bookseller to forward you a copy of a little poem of mine just published, which perhaps may amuse you for half an hour over your glass of wine; and am ever, dear sir, yours truly,

Leigh Hunt.

FROM MACVEY NAPIER.

Edinburgh, 1st August, 1842.

DEAR SIR,—I was very glad to receive a letter and proposal from you; and though I may have great difficulty, if all my arrangements shall hold good, to make room for an article from you in my *October* number, your mentioning that it would be a *convenience* to you were I to receive one for that number, gives me a very strong desire to meet your wishes, and I trust that I shall be able so to meet them. With respect to the subject, and the manner in which you propose to treat it, I see nothing to object, and much to approve; save that your intention to give *characters* of the remarkable personages of Madame de Sévigné's time, is too much in the style of a piece of book-making which has lately appeared under her name, where many characters are introduced that might have been portrayed, with equal propriety, in sundry other memoirs. This would open a field much too wide to be turned to any good account. The plan is only suited to mere book-making; and, besides, the other topics to which you advert, would seem to furnish matter more than sufficient for a moderate article.—I mean, an article of moderate length; and of that description, hampered as I shall necessarily be, must be the article. The other heads of discourse specified by you seem quite appropriate, and I have great hopes that you will turn *them* to good account. Let me only remind you of our former discussions about style, and my horror (call it puerile or pedantic, if you like) of uncalled-for innovations in language. May I add, without disturbing you, that the word "conversancy" in your letter has recalled this matter to my thoughts.

But our correspondence must not be burdened with such criticisms. Be assured that I shall read your article with an anxious desire to find it all that could be wished; and I rather think that the subject will suit you better than any other you have hitherto handled in the *E. Rev.* You will, I presume, take the publication to which I have alluded (some

parts of which are not well done) as your test. As to *time* and *space*, these most imperative concerns, you must let me have your *MS.*, if for *October*, by the middle of September *at the* FARTHEST; and though the subject is very promising, you must not, owing to my being obliged to make a *push* to admit you, exceed thirty or thirty-two pages at the *most*. I do not wish to trouble you to write a word more on this subject, save just to say whether I may securely *rely* on the *MS.* being with me by the time specified.

Believe me, with thanks for your proposal, and all good wishes, my dear sir, yours faithfully,

M. NAPIER.

P.S.—I had forgot to say, thank you for your poem. I wish with all my heart I could give it a *lift*.

To MACVEY NAPIER.

Kensington, 4th August, 1842.

MY DEAR SIR,—In the first place, let me thank you for your very kind letter. Kind words, from a sincere man, are, in my opinion, to be looked upon as kind deeds—I am sure I feel them as such; and when to these you add your desire to insert the article in the October number, in spite of the difficulty of so doing (and, indeed, the convenience to me would be *very* great), you may imagine how zealously I shall set to work.

In the second place, then, be sure that you shall have the article at the time you specify, that is to say, "by the middle of September at the farthest."

Thirdly, the space you allow me is more than I expected, and I quite agree with you as to the advisableness of omitting the "characters."

Fourthly, the word "conversancy" is a vile word, and I give it up with all my heart to your reprobation. Permit me to add, without at all presuming to treat your objections to neologism as "puerile or pedantic" (especially as the

Review has a certain reputation for classical purity, which I can easily conceive it anxious to maintain), that a sort of playful suspicion came across me, as I wrote it, that your nice eye would be too sharp for the stranger: but did it never happen to you not even to be able to *spell*, for the moment, one of the most familiar of words? In like manner, the proper and very obvious word "intercourse" did not occur to me then, nor could I recall it; and so I wrote "conversancy" in a fit of humorous desperation. But, believe me, I will do my best to give you no such trouble again in my contributions to the *Review*. (Here is another word—"contributions"—not so proper as it ought to be!)

But will you be kind enough to inform me what I am to do with the quotations—the extracts? The custom in the *Ed. Rev.*, if my memory does not deceive me, has been to give them, perhaps invariably, in French alone, when the authors quoted are French; yet I earnestly hope that there is precedent for the reverse, or that you will take pity on the numerous additional readers in these progress-of-knowledge times, who, without understanding any language but their own, take an interest in all authors of celebrity, and allow me to translate. I feel as if the article would be blighted with half its readers, if the extracts from the *Letters* were to be given in French alone. And Madame de Sévigné, whose very charm arises from something which is not merely French, but as cognizable to all the world as love and laughter, has an especial right to be understood by everybody. I could *occasionally* refer to, and quote the French, especially when the nicety or peculiarity of the original phrase demanded it; but I hope you will allow me not to "give up to *fashion* what is meant for *mankind*."

You are good enough to say that you wish you could give my little poem "a lift." Permit me to ask whether you express this as a wish to do something which is not in your power, or otherwise infeasible; or whether it be said as sounding my own inclinations? In either case, let me thank you for the wish; and in the former, believe me, when I

assure you, that I shall feel no disappointment; not, God knows, because I do not value your good word, but because I am aware of the difficulties that beset the most potent and the most kind editors very often in things of this sort, and because, above all, I had no expectation of your noticing it. When you have taken the trouble of answering this question, I will say a word or two further; being, meantime, my dear sir, your obliged and most faithful servant,

LEIGH HUNT.

Kensington, 10th August, 1842.

MY DEAR SIR,—I am very glad of what you tell me about the extracts; and thank you for your caveat about Walpole. Judgments upon writers already judged are always awkward, except after long intervals of time; and even then, after such critics as Macaulay.

I now feel perfectly comfortable with the article, and hope it will not dissatisfy you. The animal spirits of such writers as Madame de Sévigné excite one's own; and I feel as if I were going to spend a week with her, and "die with laughter" as often as she does herself. Believe me, however, I will behave very well in the drawing-rooms to which you are good enough to introduce me, and not "fright" them from their "propriety."

My little poem is, as you say, too light for a separate article; and I never dreamt of such article to be given me, even by-and-by, or, rather, a good while hence, except as comprising notices of productions of mine of more importance—supposing them to be found worthy. Perhaps, in the course of a year or two, should I write another play, or couple of plays, as successful as my first, such an honour might be done me. Meantime, if by a "side wind," you mean a word to the public *in passing*, I need not say what good as well as honour it might do me, supposing, that when you have read the poem, you can do it with any degree of *cordiality*; and by cordiality, I mean not any particular

heartiness of *praise* (believe me), but an *absence* of the appearance of the mere wish to befriend or indulge, and the presence of any genuine pleasure on the part of the critic, calculated to excite the respect of "the circles." I have done my best to curb my spirits in the *Palfrey*, and render the style as compact and unsuperfluous as possible; but nobody is bound to see in it what I fancy it may contain; and I do assure you, with all the truth which is in me, that I cannot only excuse, but be grateful, for the silence of a kind man; though, indeed, whether silent or not, I can always, thank God, respect and regard him for the good qualities that are in himself, whatever he may or may not be able to see in me. Such are the "uses of adversity," acting upon a lively temperament; for you must know, I have tropical blood in my veins, being descended from several generations of West Indians, and, perhaps, it is for this reason I have a fear of the philosophical severity of northern criticism. Under all circumstances, believe me, dear sir, most truly yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

Kensington, 26th April, 1843.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have not yet seen the *Review;* but I have heard an echo of the Puseyite scream, and was very glad of it, both for the *Review's* sake, and the world's; for it is a little too late in the day for people to be "dealing damnation round the land," and endeavouring to revive the most preposterous superstitions. I wish I could do myself the pleasure (supposing you had time to spare), of inviting you to my humble domicile during your London visit,—I mean to any hospitable purpose; for I hope I need not say how glad I should be to see you, if you found it not out of your way at any time to give me a "look in." But I am one of those fighters for liberal opinions, who in the late great "sea of disputes," have been left stranded; and though I am never hopeless, even in the worst of my struggles, my table has long been wineless, and can only save itself from blushing by seeing none about it but

family faces. It is not to everybody I would make this explanation; and circumstances have rendered any reference of the kind so painful to me, that as it can also give no pleasure to yourself, you will do a kindness to both of us *by taking no notice of it.*

I should be most glad of any new subject which you and Mr. Macaulay might be good enough to discover for me. Most faithfully yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

Kensington, 7th June, 1843.

MY DEAR SIR,—It is not from inattention to your last letter that my delay in communicating with you has arisen. I not only procured the Selwyn as quickly as possible, but read it all through, preparing my memorandums as I went, in order that I might lose no time in giving you my thorough opinion of the book, and setting about the article; but I had scarcely done this, when I found that one or two *more* volumes were intended to follow the first and second; and knowing that you dislike to notice unfinished works, I was going to inform you of this circumstance, when I heard of a new book just about to appear, called a *Diary of the Times of Charles the Second.* It was published yesterday; I got it from the circulating library in the evening; and though I have done little more than *look* it through in order to delay my letter no longer, I can safely say of *both* the works, that they are both genuine, both very dull (considering their pretensions), but both capable of furnishing curious extracts and entertaining articles; and I will set about the *Diary*, if you like, as soon as I hear from you. The Selwyn will keep till completed; and then, I think, we must say something severe of the disingenuousness of these unfinished publications "in two volumes," and the quackery of their title-pages. The only part which Selwyn himself takes in all the correspondence, is *one* point *gatherable* from a sentence in Lord Carlisle's letters (vol. ii., page 336), *another* is a letter to Madame du Deffand, p. 360, and *one whole letter* (*parliamentary*) at

p. 382 !! Many passages, however, have capabilities of *treatment;* and a curious *show-up* (of course, without indelicacy), may be made of the character of the late Duke of Queensbury, whom I remember well sitting in his parlour-balcony in Piccadilly, at the receipt of smiles from the "fair," and contempt from the public. There appear, however, to have been some not ill points about him; and he was a *philosophe* after his fashion—a very grovelling fashion.

The article on the *Diary of the Times of Charles*, I think we ought to commence with saying, that we begin to be a little tired of his sacred and meretricious Majesty, especially when he appears (as he does here) in his duller and less objectionable moments. Also, we must cry out against the eternal repetitions about who was who, and how the Duchess of Portsmouth came from France, and who was fourth Earl or Marquis of so-and-so, and how Butler wrote *Hudibras*, and was "born," and "died." The Diary contains a good many letters of the Dowager Countess of Sunderland, Waller's Sacharissa, showing her in the new and amusing light of an old gossip and scandal-monger, and giving us an opportunity of telling the earlier and more interesting part of her history, not without touching upon some points (unhackneyed) about Waller himself. I would also, if you have no objection, and without doing injustice to a valuable, but I think hitherto over-estimated character, propose to show Evelyn in a new light, as a regular town and court gossip, going among people (for curiosity's sake) whose society he affected to think a contamination, bowing (for he *must* have bowed) in the levées of the King's mistresses, and getting himself invited to dinner on purpose to meet *Blood*, of whose villanous countenance he has given an admirable description.

I have taken up your time with a long letter, but I will at all events show you how I have been thinking of your service during my silence; and how anxious I always am, dear sir, to show myself truly and faithfully yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

Kensington, 29th November, 1844.

My dear Sir,*—Thanks are such pleasant things to receive, and good-natured men take so reasonable a pleasure in knowing them to have been received, that I cannot but send you this, to say how gratified I have been by your letter. I took it for granted, of course, that you were not unaware of the merits of Spenser, "after his kind;" but I did not know that you were so fond of our old friend of the "whilom" and "eftsoons;" and I rejoice that you are. Might I venture to express a wish that the *Edinburgh Review*, some day, would take up a new edition of his works, and let the public see what you feel. Macaulay won't do it, I fear; for though a poet himself, he does not partake of the *love* of poets for Spenser; which is an anomaly that perplexes me. The *Review*, you must know, is thought a little cold at present towards works of imagination; and I long to see it at the head of the right portion of the *enthusiasm* of the age, leading it in *that* as well as in the points which it does, and with a leader's love as well as mastery.—Dear sir, believe me most sincerely yours,

Leigh Hunt.

From T. B. Macaulay.

Albany, 19th November, 1844.

My dear Sir,—Thanks for your note and for your very pleasing and interesting little volume.

I do not know that we differ in judgment about Spenser. But there is a liking which does not depend on the judgment. I see Rousseau's genius as clearly as any of his admirers. But he does not attract me. I read *Gil Blas* once a year; and I do not care if I never see Rousseau's novel again. It is the same with painting. I know that the *Raising of Lazarus*, in the National Gallery, is a great work; and I partly feel its merit. But I look at it with little or no pleasure, and should

* In answer to Professor Napier's letter, thanking him for a copy of his "very pleasing poetical work," *Imagination and Fancy*.

be very little concerned if I heard that it was burned. On the other hand, there are pictures of much less fame and power which, if I could afford it, I would hang over my fire-place, and look at half-an-hour every day. So with female beauty. If a man were to say that Mrs. Siddons was not a fine woman, we should think that he must have no eyes. But a man might well say that, though a fine woman, she did not attract him, that she did not hit his taste, and that he liked Miss Foote's or Miss O'Neil's looks better. Just so I say about Spenser. To deny him the rank of a great poet would be to show utter ignorance of all that belongs to the art. But his excellence is not the sort of excellence in which I take especial delight.

I shall be most happy to see you when you are passing by. I had heard of your windfall, and heartily rejoiced at the news. Yours very truly,

T. B. Macaulay.

From Francis Jeffrey.

Edinburgh, 8th December, 1844.

My dear Hunt,—I feel that I have been not only impolite, but truly and substantially unkind and ungrateful, in not thanking you before for a little volume which has given me (as you wisely anticipated) very great pleasure, and a letter, for which my heart thanked you still more than for the book; but I have been both busy and unwell of late, and I am always lazy, and, moreover, reckon on being forgiven for all my sins of omission, at least, by all those people whose absolution is worth having.

Your book is really very charming. The citations alone, indeed, would bewitch any one who deserves to read them. But your prose is very exquisite also. There are some trivial passages, perhaps, and some that are too careless and colloquial in expression. But your *idioms* in general are most graceful and elegant, as well as soft and natural; and the loving and reverent spirit which breathes from the whole work will dispose all those who agree in the fundamentals of

your faith to adopt all your articles, and conform to your liturgy, without much examination.

Your Spenser Gallery is gorgeous and graceful, though I am not sure that I would always assign the subjects to the same painters with you; for instance, I would have given Charissa to Reubens, rather than Raphael, and perhaps The Thames and Medway also—and I would have added more subjects, both for Rembrandt and Michael Angelo.

And now I have only to hope this little venture *succeeds* as well as it deserves: and that we may hope, therefore, for a succession of such Jewel Cases. I hope this for the sake of the *reading public*, as much as for yours—being persuaded that the best way of breaking in careless readers to a true taste in poetry, is by thus parsing and expounding, as it were, to them a few exquisite passages, and so enabling them, by their light and the master's magnifying commentary, to distinguish the elements in which all poetical beauty consists.

As for what you say of me, and my poor unpoetic name, I have only to answer, that I give you full leave to print what you please of me, and would rather that you should do it, without any previous reference to me, as I should not like to sanction either *praise* or blame. I am not sure that I should be so heroically indifferent and incurious, if I did not rely a little on your indulgence, or indeed, your partiality to me; but at all events, I will even take my chance—and engage beforehand not to quarrel with your judgment.

I hope you are well and prosperous. Ever your obliged and faithful,

F. JEFFREY.

To THOMAS MOORE.

32, *Edwardes Square, Kensington,*
8th June, 1841.

The remembrance of other days makes me dislike to call you "Sir," and for obvious reasons it might not be proper to say "Dear Sir," yet this letter comes to own to Mr. Moore

how sorry I was, this morning, to find that he had reprinted the verses from *The Times*. I confess I should almost as soon have expected their republication in your collected works (a packet for posterity), as I should have thought of repeating the letters from the *Tatler* in the selection of papers lately published under the title of the *Seer*. Not that I take upon me to assume that those papers will last beyond my life, but because I had flattered myself that there were good qualities enough on both sides to merit the survival of esteem beyond a day of hostility; and because I have taken repeated opportunities, for years past, of showing that it had long ceased on my side, and of mentioning your name with the cheerful admiration that belongs to it. That of Lord Byron himself, for an equal space of time, has been treated by me with nothing but the respect due to his poetry; and I have often expressed my regret at my former remarks on him, not because they were not true,—for they were,—critical errors excepted; but because a better knowledge of myself has taught me that no one frail human being has a right to sit in that manner in judgment on another. If, indeed, any imaginary circumstance should have induced you to misconstrue these evidences of good-will, all I can say is, that I have never written a syllable, during these late years, with the intention of wounding you, and that I never utter a syllable in private at variance with that I write. How could I renew hostilities, after consenting (permit me to use that word on the present occasion) to receive a favour from you,—the subscription to my "Poems?" and allow me to ask, how could you, after I had received the favour, suffer the attack on me to be reprinted? I will not, on many accounts, add the special reasons I have at this moment for wishing that it had not been done. Should you take occasion from this letter, at any future time, to show your accordance with that wish, let me say, that you will only do for me what I have learnt to do for all mankind; namely, to be as considerate to them as I can. Should it appear to you best to take no notice of the wish or the letter, then or now, I shall console

myself with reflecting that I neither expect you to answer it if you wish not, nor shall think the better or worse of myself in future, for retaining, unmoved, the charities which adversity has taught me. I have the honour to be Mr. Moore's old admirer and very sincere humble servant,

LEIGH HUNT.

To W. J. Fox.

Kensington, 11th February.

MY DEAR FOX,—I had cast longing looks at a pretty mystic advertisement (title, I should say), in the book-list of the *Chronicle*, and wondered whether by any chance a copy might flow towards me! And lo! it has come. You know what I think of your critical faculties; but I don't know whether you know what I think of the facultics of Mrs. Adams, and I think I should think them (to conclude these knows and thinks) if I had known nothing of her but her face. Her glance, in comment upon an observation, is itself a dozen observations in one. So you may judge with what hearty good-will and expectation I shall read the book. This weather is indeed *weather;* and what with my disappointments in the repeated delays of my new theatrical effusion (which I am now almost recasting for the third time, to suit the opinions at Covent Garden, though I really believe it will stand the greater chance of success for them), I seem half frozen myself in that same "genial soul" you so kindly speak of. And I have been seriously unwell withal, with a bad cough, &c., and forced to stay at home of evenings almost ever since the middle of autumn. But the least shake of the ice by a hand like yours makes the willing old blood within me thaw heartily to my fingers' ends; and I am, indeed, ever thankfully and truly yours,

LEONTIUS.

P.S.—I should have summoned you and Miss Flower to hear me read the play, according to your kind willingness to come;

but the management put a veto on such readings, which they thought against the interest of a play's *début*. I live in hope that with the spring I shall see you all somehow, if not, as I yet hope to, sooner at the theatre. What capital *blasphemy-turning tables* those were in the *Chronicle* against the strange article in the *Quarterly*. I have often wondered that sort of thing was not done before by some one; and hailed it accordingly.

Kensington, 29th June.

My dear Fox,—Far am I from assuming that you are to take any notice at all, much less any warm notice, of this *poemettikin* that now comes to you. I know how many things may be in the way of newspaper notices, not excepting where our friends are concerned; often, indeed, on that special account; and most of all, where the poor dog of a friend has been far more lively to *himself* than he may turn out to be to any one else! Besides, so small a poem is not like a play; and a paragraph may be quite sufficient for it, supposing it even to deserve that. But while I confess (and you may take the confession as a cunning piece of truth, if you please) that your approbation gives me a more exquisite pleasure than that of any man's in England, I beg you literally to believe that I should regard your entire silence either as a thing compelled by other circumstances, or a good-natured mode of intimating that you could not speak of me as you wished. And if you can speak but a little, I am sure that what you do say will, at all events, not be very harsh, nor do me any disservice. You will laugh at my beards, I know, and admire the rare union and probability and unexpectedness in the incident that takes the heroine back to her lover (the main point in the original story). All about King Edward, and the manner of the thing, is my own, with the exception of one passage about the sleeper. Love to the loving, from yours ever,

Leigh Hunt.

P.S.—I bespeak Miss Flower's regard (and Mrs. Adams's, if she is with you) for the passage about two lovers in the same house, and for the lady's praying behind her window flowers. Item: you must know, decency apart, I pique myself upon my old *processional* faculties, and think I have contrasted well K. Edward's coming to Kensington with the snug satisfaction of the lovers in the green lane. The book comes direct from the bookseller's while I am away, or I should have written in it.

19*th July.*

Ever kind Fox, to keep me in mind, and *so* to keep me! * I need not say that the honour of such a notice as this, in the course of a political article, is worth a dozen common notices. Believe me, in spite of a considerable paroxysm of vanity which has resulted from it, most sincerely and gratefully yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

P.S.—Positively it gives me a sort of fit of remorse, to think one has been writing semi-comic poems in the midst of so much wretchedness as one reads of in the papers. My old political propensities grow strong upon me at such times, and I prized a hundred pamphlets on the subject, which come to nothing before the rascally necessity of writing something to sell. However, if any have a right to refresh themselves with laughing, it is those who are suffering themselves; and though I am not starving, thank God, nor likely to be so, I have anxieties enough. So much the more gratitude to those whose kind notices of me help to relieve them. I have become more serious still than I intended to be; but this is one of the sweet-bitters occasioned by sympathy.

* Mr. Fox had noticed the *poemettikin* in a leading article.

To Jacintha Hunt.

Kensington, April (there's a fool's mistake for you !)—19*th September*, 1840.

My dear Jace,

With your good-natured face,—

Jacybones, darlingyboles, gem, hyacinth, &c. &c., &c., I am very much obliged to you for the book-marker, and to Miss Jervis for showing you how to make it. It is very pretty, and it was very good of you to put the word "Indicator" upon it; only I ought to blush a little, ought I not, for marking my books with the name of one of my own? However, I shan't blush at all, to say the truth; especially as I can explain, you know, who did it; and so my daughter's love will save my modesty. Should you make another for me, however, some day (sly hint !), I should like to have "Jacintha" put upon it; and then, you know, whenever I look at it, I shall be looking at *you* instead of myself, and think you are coming to say "little papa" and to give me a kiss. I am glad you like Clifton so much. I have always heard it was a beautiful place; and I am sorry I cannot have a holiday there with you and our kind friends, and take you by one hand, and Florence by another, and have a run with you over the grass. That Blind Asylum must be very interesting. It is (excuse this blot) very piteous to look at blind people; but it is observed that they are generally cheerful because others pay them so much attention; and one would suffer a good deal, to be continually treated with love. We have just begun fires. I stood, or rather sat it out, as long as I could; but my feet ached so much the day before yesterday, I could bear it no longer. As to you, I suppose you run about, and despise fires !—Ever your loving father,

Leigh Hunt.

P.S.—I am making some alterations in my play, at the request of Mr. and Mrs. Mathews, who like the rest of it very much.

Kensington, 14*th July* [1842].

JESSIE MINE,—Jacinth—Giacinta—Hyacinth—Gem—and all sorts of good things,—You delight me in being so happy. It makes amends even for your absence. And your aunt is very good to take you out, and I rejoice to see you going on with your lessons. In a few days you shall have your Italian. If we can get the Drayton to the coach-office to-day, we will; if not, it shall come to-morrow together with a parcel from Mr. Hunter. Your letter arrived too late for the morning's carrier. I must not forget to say how glad I am to see you taking more pains with your handwriting (which reminds me, by the way, that I must take more pains with mine, otherwise it will be said, "Physician, heal thyself." But your letter found me in the middle of hard work, and I must return to it, and so you will find an excuse for me). Tell your aunt that she need not be in a hurry to return the Drayton. Some months hence will do; for I am writing something at present, and shall be for a good while, which will require no reference to it. Your mother sends a world of love. She wonders a little that you have not said whether you received her last letter, but supposes it may not have reached before you wrote. Give our best loves to your aunt, and make our stateliest obeisances to Miss Jane, and never cease to love your loving father,

LEIGH HUNT.

Kensington, 31*st August* [1842].

Darling Jace,

With your fairy face,—

I said I would answer every letter you wrote me—and so I will, though I can never write as much as I wish, my pen is so hard pressed with other work. I am sorry

you have had so bad a toothache, and had I seen your face should most undoubtedly have called you old Swelly-bones, not, you know, because I did not feel for it, but to help you to bear it as well as you are accustomed to do, and be a merry little philosopher. Send me some of your verses that I may tell you what I think of them. Never mind how imperfect they are, provided you write upon something which you really feel and know; for that is the way to begin to write poetry. Perhaps they may be very bad in many respects, or in *all!* and then we will wait and see if we cannot do better by-and-by. Perhaps you may think some of them very good; and what if they should be your worst? For, alas! that is sometimes the case. The first verses which I remember having any grand notion of (I mean my own writing) were upon a foolish though good-natured man (and so far he was a wise one), whom I took to be a great general—the late Duke of York, brother to King George the Fourth. I wrote upon his "Victory" at Dunkirk over the French, and described him as galloping about through the field of battle shooting the Frenchmen "in the eye." Now, this victory turned out to be a defeat, and modern generals never gallop about through the field, or shoot people at all, if they can help it. So much for the knowledge with which your father's rhyming set out. They have printed the *Palfrey* in an American *newspaper*, the whole of it, engravings and all; and another pleasant thief, one *Galignani* at Paris, is going to do the same, and so hinder Englishmen in France from buying it in London. Now, here is a good crammed little letter after all, I *think*,—eh, old Mistress Ink? God bless Jacey mine, prays her loving father,

LEIGH HUNT.

Kensington, 8th October.

DARLING JACE,—I can write you but a very little letter this time, and indeed, you know, I do not *owe* you *any* letter, for your last was an answer to a volunteer one on my part. Not

that formal reckonings in such matters are required between friends, though the spirit of them is proper enough. But I do not like to let your answer, in the present instance, be received without a reply, and so I thank you heartily for it, and for the nice way in which it was written; and am very glad you take such pleasure in your aunt's teaching, because that is at once the best return you can make to a teacher so kind, and the best surety for your turning all that you learn to good and pleasant account. And so, with many kisses to your honest good-natured lips, and love to aunt and all other loving people, and love from mamma, and love from Vincent and Jule, I am, loving Jacey mine, your very loving father,

LEIGH HUNT.

P.S.—I remember the "cottage" so well, and am so glad you remember it also, that it made me long to have you here, in order to give you and the others a dance on my knee again *on our way there*, though I suppose I should find the travellers pretty heavy for me now. Your "*broad* low cottage" is the right thing. Here is a long letter at last! Go along with you, naughty, good, darling Jaceybones—you make me forget my work.

Kensington, 21st October [1842].

JACEY MINE,—(Beginning with "diffidence" and ending with sauciness) I am very much obliged to you for remembering my birthday, especially with such pretty green and white mouffetis, which are now before me, delighting my paternal eyes. Thank you, also, for teaching me how to spell "mouffetis," for I am sure I did not know before. I used to fancy them, in "my mind's eye," spelt "Muftis," and think of the old warm-hearted Mussulman priests who are so called. You shall have the book you want, and the seals, in mamma's parcel; and as I am as fond of seals as yourself, pray send me an impression of any one you can, if you think I have not seen it before. . . . . We all send dozens of,

kisses for your one apiece, and as to me, you can't conceive how truly I am your affectionate father,

LEIGH HUNT.

We have had no new visitors, and scarcely any old ones (we endeavoured to keep so quiet) except —— laughing like a goblin.

Kensington, 29th March [1843].

JACEY MINE,—You are very fortunate to be able to talk of going here and there in the spring-time of the year,—now to see a wood, and now to see a cathedral (which latter, by-the-by, when you *do* see, you must think of the wood; for cathedral aisles are supposed to be imitations of tall alleys in the woods or groves). No such luck is mine, tied as I am to my desk, though I continue to snatch a walk every day, and make what I can out of dusty roads and an occasional bit of lane. And then Hastings! I hope you will go there, for then we shall see you, I trust, on your road; and, at all events, it cannot now be very long before I see you again for *good*. Thank Heaven, I never yet saw you for *ill;* and I am sure I never shall, as far as my Jacey's good intentions and goodheartedness are concerned. I *do* think, as you bid me, about the castle at Hastings, and the woods, and all which you hope to enjoy; but I can't "*only* think," because I have so many other things to think about. I have always time, however, to give a thought to dear children and friends; so with love to aunty, and kind compliments to all others at Tamworth, I'm Jaceybones's loving father,

LEIGH HUNT.

Kensington, 15th May [1843].

MY DEAR JACE,—I like the sort of letters you write us from Hastings. They tell us what you are about, and what you see and think. You seem to pass your time very reasonably and pleasantly; and justly suppose I should be glad to be with you, sitting in beautiful places among trees, and

reading books. Besides I want to look upon your face, which I have not now beheld for these ten months—a long while for a father's hungry eyes. Your mother and I were at Hastings for some weeks, many years ago, before you were born; and I remember some parts of the place as if I had been there but yesterday. We lived at the entrance of the town, near a division of the road, and a stream; and the back of our house looked on a garden sloping up a hill. A Mr. Bossum used to visit our landlord, or a Mr. Cossum, I forget which, and there was a shopkeeper at the entrance of the town, whose name was the *other* of the two names, whichever that was; and Hastings had then a vile high pavement on one side of the street, very fit to break people's necks; and you must know there was a pianoforte in the house; and so I used to thump the pianoforte to a threatening air, and sing the following words, the absurdity of which has made me remember them:—

"If the people of Hastings don't mend this vile street,
I'll Bossum and Cossum, and kick all I meet."

There was another couplet; but having more sense in it, I suppose, it has slipped my memory. Give my love to your aunt, and kind remembrance to Jane, and tell me whether you have seen a guide to Hastings, and what sort of book it is. Have you seen a spot called Lover's Seat? and Battle Abbey? Many kisses from your loving father,

LEIGH HUNT.

Kensington, 15th June [1843].

DARLING JACE,—I cannot send you a whole letter, being knocked up with other writing, but I should be more knocked up with self-rebuke were I to take no notice of yours. I rejoice to hear such good accounts of you, and to find you writing in such health and spirits. We all long to see you, and Julia is in terrible want of a companion. However, the more of Hastings, the meantime, the better. I envy you all

in your green walks and blowing about on the beach; and then

> There are the caves,
> As well as the waves;
> And you all eat and drink
> So much, you can't think!
> Four times a day;
> And all the rest's play,
> Except when you look
> Just into a book
> To throw it *aside* again,
> For a good donkey-*ride* again.
> Lord! what a set
> Of idlers well met!
> And yet, in my heart,
> I can't find a part
> That don't wish 'em happy,
> Quoth——sneaking old pappy!

To Vincent Leigh Hunt.

Kensington, 5th June [1843].

My dear Boy,—Your mother and I were delighted to hear from you, and it was very kind to write so long a letter. But do not think it necessary to be always so long (for your holidays are valuable), and, above all, do not give way to melancholy thoughts, nor even say such tenderly kind things of us just now, for you must know, dear as they are to our hearts, I had some difficulty to get through them with my voice (reading your letter aloud). The postman was very late (it being Monday), but he was a very noble postman, unlike the last, and seeing me coming towards him, got the letter out and held it up to me, just as if he knew what I was thinking of. So I imitated his virtue, and held up the letter to your mother and Mrs. N. in the balcony, and we were all very happy and merry. I then took my gallant walk, and got my highly respectable left leg nearly wet through with a ferocious shower, but the sky cleared again, and I reached Gunnersbury (Gunnersbury itself—Rothschild's house, where

I have found a pretty lane for us), and returning home in good time for dinner, I scratch this note, not being able to mind your kind injunction to the contrary. My late walks have done me much good, and to-day we commenced our regular eight o'clock breakfasts, and shall have the whole day properly before us. Kindest love to your aunt and Jace (with thanks for Jaceybones's letter), and best remembrances to Jenny, and a thousand congratulations on your getting down to Hastings so comfortably, and the holidays you have before you. Pray make the utmost and merriest of them for all our sakes, entreats your loving father,

LEIGH HUNT.

Kensington, 21st June [1843].

MY DEAR BOY,—No two persons, I think, in the world understand one another's feelings better than you and I; so pray be always quite at your ease with respect to what you do or do not do in regard to writing; for I shall always put it to its right account, and know that you are acting towards me in the most delicate and conscientious manner. When your letter came yesterday, I was in the act of going out in a hurry, by omnibus; so, after ascertaining that all was well, I put it in my pocket, and did not read it till I was in the midst of the bustle of the Strand. In a moment, I was in the thick of the solitude with you, looking at the old church and the woodman, and hearing "the blessed silence." It is curious to reflect how totally one can be absorbed, and afar off, on these occasions (for I was literally so), and yet go on, in and out, among a crowd of people. How it rejoices me to see you realizing thus something of your day-dreams, and, above all, getting better health. I think of you very often, and wish you by me; and yet I think I could miss you a good half year, or even more, provided you came back plump and jovial. I am going out again this morning to see Webster, who was not in town yesterday; and the hurry makes me write this scrawl, but I am resolved not to lose another post. Love to all, and tell Jace, with a kiss, that I

will write to her again when she does to her and your most loving father,

L. H.

Kensington, 26th June [1843].

My dear Vincent,—A thousand thanks for your letter of this morning, full of the most precious affection. I cannot, indeed, say a thousandth part of what I think of it, or of the pleasure it has given me. So your heart must imagine it. I shall keep it next my own, in my left waistcoat pocket, ready to be read again and again, till you return.

Mamma has told you of my interview with Webster. Yesterday evening, for a wonder, I was not only out of doors, but out of Kensington, and at no less distance than Brompton Crescent, where I drank tea with the Planchés. There was great inquiry after "the angel." What I chiefly mention the visit for, however—knowing that you would always hear of us rather than of yourself—is to tell you that I am not only going to write for the prize comedy, to which Planché strongly encourages me, but that I am at this moment occupied in writing a two-act farce, the subject of which he equally approves. You remember the *exordium* of a comedy which Mathews liked, and would have bought of me? Well, it is that turned into said two-act farce. The main subject is a young Frenchwoman, who has lived long enough with English families abroad to speak English (with little interesting absurdities of accent and mistake), married to an English valet, who has told her the most excessive stories of English decorum and propriety, &c. &c., all which she finds contradicted, to her great bewilderment and his jealous horror. I expect to finish it in the course of a fortnight; and he says it could be got out in August. He says if I would "condescend" to set my wits at writing two and three act pieces—the usual Haymarket fashion—I should *get rich!* So, as I am very desirous indeed to get rich for all our sakes, I mean very *seriously* to try. That's your only way to be merry—I mean, *seriously* writing farces. Dear Jaceybones to-morrow,

with thanks meantime for the beautiful bush of seaweed. Your mother also hopes to write to you to-morrow, and sends her most affectionate love and thanks for your letter of to-day. Love to aunt, and congratulations to you all on the beautiful weather. I walk a great deal, and cogitate comedy incessantly. Joy of your great dinners. Your very loving father,

L. H.

Kensington, 15th June [1844].

VINCENZINO MIO,—We had a glorious drive through Highgate and Hampstead, all sunshine, breeze, wood, field, and exclamation. I suppose you have given the bit of paper about the gardens to Miss Margaret Gillies,—her paintings at Mortimer Street put it out of my head—just punishment for the punctuality upon which I had just been valuing myself! It must be shown at the gate, mind, in order to secure the power of having the requisite permission to pay seven-and-sixpence a head! Your most loving father,

L. H.

Wimbledon, 18th February [1846].

MY DEAR BOY,—You did quite right about the books. When next you send a parcel, let me have the vol. ix. of the *Brit. Poets*, containing *Falconer*, the volume of the *Parnaso* containing *La Nautica* (a poem on Navigation—I think about the 40th vol.), and Thomson's Poems, *our* copy, the little thick old edition of beloved Cooke. I want to read him in his own beautiful fields between this place and Richmond. The close of your letter would always have been precious to me, but at this moment it was particularly so; and I could not forbear sending it in my letter to the Duke; for when —— thus distresses us, I always have a dread, among my other dreads, lest people should think ill of his father. Not, however, that I believe the Duke would; but still it was delightful to me to send.—Your most loving father,

L. H.

To J. W. Dalby.

32, Edwardes Square, Kensington,
20th October, 1840.

Behold, my dear sir, the niggardly bit of paper to which I am obliged to have recourse in order to insure myself against the chances of delay! Do not measure my gratitude by it, but simply my horror of again risking the appearance of *in*gratitude. Your letter, and your luxurious dish (for that "coming event casts its odour before"), and your most beautiful flowers (which in their dying lustre beat all that we can now boast hereabouts), reached us only this afternoon, owing to our change of abode; which said abode we hope you will take an early opportunity of seeing, because it will please your kind eyes with its superiority to the last. Need I add how welcome were your verses? or how fit your verses always are to accompany flowers, since the bloom of the heart is sure to be upon them. Very different looking (and yet the heart is in it, too) is the blush with which I must remind you of a little printed packet which gives me a pang of remorse whenever I look into a corner of one of the drawers of my writing-table! Will you write me one word about it, stating your immediate desire respecting it; and I will promise, on the faith of the real affection I bear you, never to delay a day's post again.

Mrs. Hunt, who, alas! is again aching with rheumatism, joins me in cordialest wishes and thanks to you and Mrs. Dalby. May love and health ever attend you both.

Leigh Hunt.

Kensington, 22nd August, 1844.

My dear Sir,—Glad as I am to hear from you, and honoured and *heart-warmed* as I have always felt myself by your verses, I am sure you will acquit me of all self-seeking in *that* direction, when I expressed anxiety at not having news of you. It was necessary—I should rather say fitting—to the impulsive and cordial gracefulness of your muse to

show herself unfettered by any spirit of formal recurrence; I am only afraid she visited me too often as it was, as far as any desert of mine was concerned; and I would have protested, in the name of the little modesty you have left me, even against the new wreath of laurel she has brought me, if I could have found it in my heart to quarrel with anything that comes warranted by your own.

23rd August.

I thought I should be in time yesterday for the post, but finding the case otherwise, I discontinued my letter till to-day. I have been writing of late, evening as well as morning, which is a thing I avoid when I can, and it has knocked me up. But I am now taking a holiday for a day or two. Let me here say that this stress of work will cease with the month's end, and that I shall be most happy to see you and Mr. De Wilde any day in the course of September, trusting that you will come early, so that we may dine, &c., at country-hours, and pass (as far as we possibly can) the whole day together. It will be small enough for all the talk we shall cram into it.

How could you ask whether I should like to see the verses in print? They would do honour "to me and to yourself" anywhere, and I only wish I could see them in every journal in England. I shall tell the *Examiner* what you say about them. And how can Mrs. Dalby talk about "nervousness" in coming to see *me?!!*—me, who am the known humble servant of all true womankind. I shall be most glad to see her and her little girl, and to take the latter on my knee (to say nothing of the former,—Deâ volente,—only I try hard to persuade myself that I am not yet QUITE *old* enough to render the taking such a liberty proper). Mrs. Hunt, alas! is laid up with the consequences of acute rheumatism; but I am sure if she will see any comparative stranger in her bedroom, she will see Mrs. Dalby; and, at all events, I can both see and entertain her, with the help of a chop and a glass of wine, if she will make herself at home, and partake of our most unpretending dinner. (Mrs. Hunt bids me say, with her regards, that she will "most certainly" see

Mrs. Dalby.) Thanks for your local and biographical histories of Hertfordshire, of which you must give me more when you come. I am very much mistaken indeed if what my friend Bulwer said of my prose is not in that identical work you speak of. . . . .

I have got a nice little windfall (say, rather, a heaven-fall, —one of the wishes of my beloved friend Shelley) of 120*l.* a year, kindly awarded to me by my young friend, his son. Neither is it the only benefit I shall receive. Dear S., thank God, knew that I would have stood by him in any trouble, and that I did. But he never made calculations of such things between us; so neither must I. What you say of him, is what I constantly feel. Pray believe me ever, my dear sir, your obliged and sincere friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

P.S.—I suppose, by the silence of the *Northampton Mercury* about my new edition, that it does not at all like the changes in it, and is loth to say so. Silent or not, I know it to be my warm friend; and an ever warm and grateful friend has Mr. De Wilde in yours and his affectionate servant, L. H. How charming in particular is all that passage in your poem about the *swan!* The seal (as very likely you knew) is said to be a fragment of the face of Alexander the Great. It has a fine breathing look, has it not?

Kensington, 22nd July, 1847.

MY DEAR DALBY,—Pardon my not having written sooner, and for writing even now as briefly as I do. I was delighted to hear from you, and to find you addressing me in a way that befits cordial friends; yet, notwithstanding this, and although I begin to feel the benefit of repose, I am still obliged to resume my pen with caution, and to thank even my numerous kind congratulators one at a time. This necessity will pass away; but the main question with regard to my health is, whether or not it is finally declining, or can recover itself. My natural animal spirits, and the unexpected

bettering of a cough which has been growing upon me these seven years, make me, in spite of much change and thinness, think the latter; and you may be sure I shall leave no cheerful methods untried to make me think it more and more. Among these will be moving to a higher and drier ground (gravelly) a little farther from London; and so great is the regard I have for you and De Wilde, that I have often wished to live near you both, and try to get well in your nature-loving and friend-loving company. But I believe I cannot get out so far; and, luckily, I have also excellent and loving friends nearer me. I rejoice in your having "emptied the bottle." The country part of the amateur project will be carried out next week at Manchester and Liverpool—at M. on Monday, and at L. on Wednesday. The town part was given up in delicacy to what was done by Government.

How pleased I am at the naming of the walks, and at all the feminities round about you, great and small! Please to express my gratitude to them; and tell the lady who was "mad with delight" at reading my verses, that it is lucky for her I did not hear her say so; for I should probably have become mad enough with thanks for it—to forget my gray hairs, and jump up and give her a kiss. You see I retain my cheerfulness; and in truth this godsend of a pension is delicious to me, and makes me, in spite of time and ailment, seem to begin life over again.

God bless you, dear Dalby, prays heartily your obliged and affectionate friend, LEIGH HUNT.

P.S.—I conclude that dear De Wilde got my rejoinder to his letter, returning him his generous enclosure to the proposed Compensation Fund.

To G. J. DE WILDE.

Kensington, 7th February, 1844.

MY DEAR SIR,—I fear,—or should I not rather say, though at the flattering cost of your regret, I *hope?*—that you will be disappointed in the account [query, amount ?] of my new contents. Expenditure is the "limitary cherub" of booksellers,

and its economy in the present instance too well (as you would kindly phrase it) falls in with my own fears as to what the next generation might think of me if I hazarded too large a republication, like that of which you speak. For, recollect, they will not take such flesh and blood interest in an author as friends who have shaken hands with him—they have a terrible fastidious eye to superfluities and big parcels, and insist upon having no sort of trouble given them in the way of "making allowances." I have only to hope that the book will not contain too much as it is; for, besides almost all in the 8vo volume, there will be the *Palfrey* and the *Legend of Florence*, as well as numerous little pieces that have been scattered in the magazines, including some, if not all, of the Flowers you mention—the *Glove and the Lion*, *Abou Ben Adhem and the Angel*, an ebullition on *Christmas*, and a batch of three sonnets—which you must know, privately speaking, are my "favourite" sonnets, as Brummel said of his left leg—entitled *The Fish*, *The Man*, and *The Spirit*. Also a *Hymn to St. Valentine*, and *Captain Sword and Captain Pen*, a terrible long list of strategies (though I venture to say to *you*, that I think the military procession in it is one of my maturest bits of poetry (expression-wards). At all events, the book, as you say, will be a book wearable and worn-out-able in the pocket; and God send it may be reduced there to shreds, in happy and relishing sympathy with crumbs of biscuit. The 8vo volume has latterly been rising in price upon the bookstalls; and Moxon tells me that he verily expects a large sale for it among the beloved generation of the buyers of pocket volumes. You may imagine how this pleases an author who has had to fight his way through all kinds of political and religious and un-animal-spirits obstacles, and whom some people still seem to think incapable of writing poetry because he writes prose, while others (my friend Sir E. Bulwer among them), who honour me by liking my poetry, find it difficult to make out any claim for my prose. My vanity (you may guess) easily contrives a mode of reconciling these two faculties; and it is truly delightful to me, I confess, to think that I am going at last with the

prestige of a cheap and popular verse as well as prose writer, headlong into the pockets of the community. You know in what sense, and in what sense alone, I am speaking of those recipients,—of whatever importance to me may be the half-crowns which I shall displace.

Dear sir, I know not how I shall be able to turn with this smile on my face to speak of bereavement like yours, were it not the privilege of wise and kind sorrows to get as much good as they can (ultimately) out of the good of others, both for their own sakes and for those of the benignant hearts which they have left, and which must ever desire their solace. I have often thought of you with reference to this grief, and as often congratulated myself as your sympathizer, on your being the man you are, capable of paying the successful honour of this endeavour to a beloved memory. Besides, it is my firm belief,—as firm as the absence of positive, tangible proof can let it be (and if we had *that*, we should all kill ourselves, like Plato's scholars, and go and enjoy heaven at once), that whatsoever of just and affectionate the mind of man is made by nature to desire, is made by her to be realized, and that this is the special good, beauty, and glory of that illimitable thing called space,—in which there is room for *every* thing.

Pray give my kindest remembrances to Mr. Dalby, and say how happy I shall be to see him. Pangs of remorse sometimes come across me in connection with that proof-sheet which, during a time of trouble, lay so long in my desk, and I then fear a little (a very little, knowing his goodness) that this is the reason why he does not send me his truly genial poems oftener,—I mean such as those you speak of. Pray let me have a copy, if you can find one:—and where are your own, of the same identical hearty flavour? There was truth in those poems of you two,—real hearty truth founded on actual circumstances of enjoyment,—sometimes wanting condensation, but always to the purpose. Ever, my dear sir, most truly yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

When you come, come early.

Kensington, 8th February, 1844.

My dear Sir,—I forgot to say in my yesterday's letter, that by "early" I mean early in the morning; for as I know that humble fare will not frighten you and Mr. Dalby, I expect you to dine with me, and our *suburbanities* here enable us to keep good country hours, and dine early,—to wit, at two o'clock; so that if you could come not later than twelve or so, we could get a bit of a walk before we sat down to our mutton. Only tell me a day or two beforehand, that I may be sure to be at home.

The *Pictorial History of England* has made me "sing smaller" than I hoped I did, compared with some of my contemporaries; so I comfort my vanity with thinking that even historians are not the best critics, and that Hume, who could not fathom Spenser (with whom, of course, I am not such a fool as to compare myself) discerned Homeric inspiration in *Epigoniad* of Wilkie! Ever most truly yours,

Leigh Hunt.

Kensington, 2nd December.

My dear Sir,—So much do and *did* I agree with you about railroads, that if you look again at those lines which you quoted from the *Rustic Walk*, you will find a smiling jest upon them and their termination. Railroads are the interfusers of mankind, and will hasten their improvement far more than even printing has done; for knowledge only informs men of their interests, intercourse makes them feel and secure them. In the greatest haste, ever most truly yours,

Leigh Hunt.

From G. J. De Wilde.

Parade, Northampton, 13th June, 1847.

My dear Sir,—I read with inexpressible pain the announcement in the *Atlas* of this day, that you are prevented from

continuing *The Streets of London*, by ill-health. I need hardly say that the anxiety which all your friends must feel at any such announcement is increased on this occasion by the tone of one or two of your recent articles in the *Atlas*. May the "close" of which you have spoken be, notwithstanding, far off. May you yet live to see the realization of your just expectations. May a happy old age await you, blest with the competence and ease which should accompany it. You already have the "honour," the "love," and the "troops of friends."

Some weeks ago, immediately after the publication in the *Atlas* of the first article in which you allude to the prosecution of 1813, I wrote to the editor of that journal, suggesting that the people, in whose cause you suffered, were your real debtors; and that irrespective of any acknowledgment of your claim by the Government, the people ought to reimburse you. I, therefore, proposed a "Leigh Hunt Compensation Fund." The editor expressed his concurrence in the suggestion, and deferred the publication of my letter only until he had consulted influential parties who were likely to give it a first impulse onward. In this good work, he is, I hope, now engaged; but, in the meantime, I see no reason why I should delay paying my trifling contribution till the machinery is completed. Permit me therefore, to make you the depositary of the enclosed 5*l.* towards the "Fund," with a hope that you will receive it as the measure of my ability, not of my sense of what I owe you for the instruction and happiness your writings have afforded me from my boyhood upwards; or of the influence which they may have had upon my disposition and endeavours. Although so diligent a student ought to have profited more by them, let me, in all humility, declare my conviction that they have made me not only a happier but a better man.

Pray, believe me, my dear sir, with earnest prayers for your speedy restoration to health and happiness, your truly obliged and affectionate friend and servant,

G. J. De Wilde.

To G. J. De Wilde.

Kensington, 16th June, 1847.

My dear De Wilde,—(Pray let me write thus, and call me Hunt, will you?) You are an excellent good man, with a loving heart, and I love, respect, and thank you accordingly; but since you wrote to me you will probably have seen by the *Athenæum* the project which my friends Dickens, Forster, and others have in view for me theatre-wards; and this has superseded the necessity of your own most kind intention. I write briefly, because illness has forced me to rest, and my health for these two or three years past has been severely shattered; but I am endeavouring to piece myself together again, and perhaps rest, and relief from anxiety, will do it. Natural cheerfulness will not be wanting. How could it, when hearts like yours come about me? Pray tell me whether I can transact any business for you in London with your generous enclosure. If not, I will send it back in the same manner in which it came. This movement of yours, and the delightful things you say to me about having done you good, have given exquisite pleasure to your grateful and affectionate friend,

Leigh Hunt.

My hand, you see, is still as firm as becomes an old reformer. It is the mystery in me called a liver which is weak; and of late years the chest and lungs have been affected—just punishment for one who thought *them* invincible.

Kensington, 23rd June, 1847.

My dear De Wilde,—How sorry I am that I can only write you a few words, owing to a bad, bilious head, which I am forced to rest. But every one of them is full of tenderness towards you, even though you did touch on Edwardes Square and not look in upon me, which another time I hope you would look upon as an unkindness not to be thought of.

I will go as soon as I can and be photographized for your sake; though, if Phœbus paints my likeness as he has done too many others (as if out of a god's resentment at being forced to put his hand to human work), I am not sure that I shall have the courage to send you the result, being drearified enough in visage already by years and sickness. How, then, shall I look under his indignant shading, and that sort of ungrateful face present to my friend! But we shall see. Meantime, however, you must not think ill of me for returning the five-pound note. Should occasion render its reappearance advisable, I promise you I will let you know; and I esteem and regard you so much, that were you a man of princely fortune I would not hesitate to accept a hundred times as much from you; but poets and humanists like my friends De Wilde and Dalby (I mention him, too, because I always associate him with you in my mind), must have thousands of things to do with the fruits of their industry, which, short of the most loving necessity, must not be interfered with; and therefore you must be content with resuming the money, and leaving the obligation on my heart. *That* it shall never part with.—Your grateful and affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

To CHARLES OLLIER.

Kensington, 19th November, 1840.

MY DEAR OLLIER,—Horribly grieveth it me that I cannot have the pleasure of accompanying you to the kind invitation of Lady Stepney; but it is only a few days since I announced to all my friends my luckless inability to indulge myself with visits to any one of them for some weeks to come, owing to an anxious pressure of business after an attack of illness; and as some of the kindest of these friends had pressed me hard to come to them, a charming woman (fortunately for me, so far) will, I am sure, be the first to excuse me for not liking to appear to neglect old acquaintances, for the sake of making even such a new one as herself. Should her ladyship call me

to mind some day hence, and do me the honour of repeating the invitation, very glad shall I be to join you at her table.

And now I am going to be very indecent; but it is the Miss Berrys and my beloved Lady Suffolk that make me so; so they must be my excuse. You remember a certain magnificent promise, of a certain dear friend of mine, respecting a certain four volumes, of one Horace Walpole, to add to my first and second. Well, I sit here very knocked up of evenings (*except when a friend will look in*) and I want a new book horribly, and so I fancied that if I wrote about it, and confessed my indecorum, the said Magnifico would possibly send me by Parcels-Delivery Company (or, far better, himself accompany) a certain beautiful brown-paper square parcel, to bless mine eyes withal. Furthermore, are there no *more proofs?* and will nobody come and take his chop and coffee together with me some evening, at what hour he pleases?—Ever truly his

LEIGH HUNT.

* *

Kensington, 5th January, 1844.

MY DEAR OLLIER,—The Ben cometh to Burlington Street with many thanks. You and I, however, have not had our joint satisfaction out of him yet; so we will have at him again when I come to Lisson Grove. (You must know I like to repeat those words, "Lisson Grove," for my mother lived there once, or, rather, on Lisson Green, when green there was; and the name of the place was often in her mouth.) Everybody seems to have been ill during the late weather, so we must take a shabby, nay, a reasonable and gregarious comfort out of the general distress. I need not tell you how your relish of my *Jar* rejoices me, especially as I have heard nothing about it from any one else, and (to judge by an advertisement quoting the newspapers) my old friend of the *Sun*, who is alive to the merits of the other contributors, does not think it worth his while even to notice me. I therefore began to think I had written something very bad, till your kind mention of what you thought of it

came to set me up. To complete my grievance, M. has sent me no copy, so that I have not seen your own pages in it, and you know how desirous I always am to do that. I must muster up confidence, and send for one.—Most sincerely yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

P.S.—What exquisite copper-plate writing is that in Ben's title-page! I should like to write just such a hand, if it would not have an air of being *too* good.

FROM CHARLES OLLIER.

18, *Hayes Place, Lisson Grove,*
6th January, 1844.

MY DEAR HUNT,—I have seen handwriting of yours very like the copper-plate words in Ben's title-page. You are more than half an Italian in your penmanship, no less than in your poetry; and to be so in the latter is, as you know, to be very English. This is not so great a bull as it looks to be. I am glad to hear of your tender associations with Lisson Grove, and only hope they will soon tempt you here.

Your *Jar* has had very many lovers, to my knowledge. I recollect being excessively delighted with one of Cowley's daring words in the preface to his works. He is speaking of a certain manner of treating lyrics, and adds that it was practised by "Pindar above all men LIVING." This is grand and noble, isn't it? And in Cowley's large sense of the word, I will be bold to say that no man "living" could have written the paper on Sicily but yourself. To use a bad metaphor, your honey is a lump of precious gold. There is only one thing in it which does not give me pleasure, and that is the astounding praise of Allan Ramsay. I have looked at his *Gentle Shepherd*, and am amazed that you should call him a better pastoral poet than Chaucer, and Spenser, and Shakspeare, and Fletcher, and Jonson, and Browne, and Milton, all of whom have written pastorals. In what does his superiority consist? Surely not in his barbarous diction, his

patois, his no-English, his provincial slang? And as for truth of representation, either in character or circumstance, he is no more true than Pope in *his* pastorals, or than the most ideal presentment of fable. There are no gentle shepherds in the world; there are no peasant-labourers who sit under trees, and languish, and sing songs about their mistresses. The only mistress they glorify is the landlady of "The Fox and Goose," who sells the best beer, bacon, and "baccy." If we are to have falsifications of life (and I, for one, delight enthusiastically in pastorals), let them be done with grace and high imagination—in the style of Fletcher, Jonson, Milton, and the rest. Saving your presence, and your high judicial authority, I am inclined to say (aside), "A fig for Allan Ramsay!" Pastoral is an *idea*, and nothing else; and the Scotchman knows little about it, in my poor opinion.

Pray come and see me before the coming-on of 1896.

With kind remembrances to Mrs. Hunt,—I am, dear Hunt, always yours,

CHAS. OLLIER.

A gentleman, the other day, was telling me one of your youthful pieces of drollery, which, as you have doubtless forgotten it, I will rehearse to you. Somebody was treating you with a piece of heavy moralizing, concluding thus:—"But you know, Mr. Hunt, that *extremes meet*." "Yes," said you; "and butcher's meat." There! It is justifiable to laugh at one's own joke *redivivus;* so I hope you will chuckle over that as I did.

TO CHARLES OLLIER.

Kensington, 9th January, 1844.

MY DEAR OLLIER,—A very nice and controversy-provoking letter have you written me about Allan Ramsay; and I only wish I could write you three sheets in answer, instead of doing what I am about; but I must delay my response till

my No. 2 of the *Blue Jar* appears, when you shall see it in the exordium thereto, with what courtesy you may guess. I dare not touch upon the subject now, lest my pen run away with me. I shall only observe that I am of your religion, nevertheless, about ideal pastoral; but I think Allan belongs to it, too! by a process which I hope to prove, and that even by the very dint of his *sort* of matter-of-fact. But, hallo! my pen is off.

What you say of "Italian" and of "living" is delightful; and I thank you for the hearty, egotistical laugh afforded me by the "butcher's meat." As to coming to see you, pray still believe that I am always coming; but my cough makes me afraid of the night air just at this *epoch*. (Strange word that to come into one's head!)

Vincent begs me to say that the note about Henry Welby is in *Tatler*, vol. iv., p. 258. The account of him, he says, is taken from an old pamphlet, containing a portrait and verses from Shakerly, Marmion, Heywood, and others. I have seen the portrait somewhere.—Ever heartily your

L. H.

P.S.—Capital dramatic surprise at end of the *Benighted Traveller*, *equally unexpected and probable*. But you should have given him a few scratches and ditches. He is too comfortable, considering his love and all. The dog is absolutely luxurious in the middle of his hearth. I meant to speak of this first, and, lo! it is last. Such is the habit of self-reference.

FROM CHARLES OLLIER.

18, *Hayes Place, Lisson Grove,*
10*th January*, 1844.

I am anxious to see how you will prove Allan Ramsay to be, "in many respects," the best pastoral poet in the world. Don't forget that the *Gentle Shepherd*, after all, is a copy of Theocritus—herdsmen singing for a flute as a prize. Look at the opening—a fellow amorous of a child "just entered on

her *teens*." Between twelve and thirteen! O the wretch! as the women would say. Only just ask Mrs. Hunt, privately and in confidence, what she would have thought of me, had she heard, thirty years ago, that I had been making love to a pinafore innocent, "just entered on her teens"—that I had been diverting the mind of a juvenile from her sampler, and filling it with unfit ideas? Such a thing would be treason to the buxom glories of what I once heard an old woman call "the human sex."

Ramsay, to be sure, is ideal enough; but there are good ideas and bad ideas. To be snatched from the commonplaces of life that one might "ride on the curl'd clouds," or penetrate the solitudes of a poet's imagination, is good; but it is not so to leave the busy facts of society merely to get on the platitude of a barren table-land. Out of a proper reverence to my master's opinion, I have looked again and again at the *Gentle Shepherd*, and I am so unfortunate as to think it the flattest rubbish I ever read. "Prove and Love" in plenty. Take any one page of Browne's *Pastorals*, or Jonson's *Shepherd*, or Fletcher's *Shepherdess*—see the fancy, the imagination, the exquisite truth of landscape painting; and then browze on the insipid leaves of the Scotch bookseller if you can.

To Charles Ollier.

Kensington, 11*th January*, 1844.

My dear Ollier,—Vincent's mistake originated in his supposing your copy of the *Tatler* to be the same as ours. The Number is 228; but the account of Welby has no reference to the number: it is a *note* upon a *note*, in consequence of the insertion of his name in some remarks on barometers, in which the name of Gadbury, the astrologer, is brought forward, which said Gadbury had alluded to said Welby. I hope you will not find this explanation "confusion worse confounded." Occasion is thus taken by Dr. Calder, the chief commentator of that edition of the *Tatler*, to introduce the story as you find it, *verbatim*, in the *Romances of Real Life*,

with the addition of the following reference :—"From a very scarce pamphlet, in 4to, in six sheets, printed by N. Okes, 1637; and reprinted in Morgan's *Phœnix Britannicus*, 4to, 1731, which is likewise scarce. In the original publication there is a print of H. Welby, Esq., in his elbow chair, &c., and in both books there are copies of verses, by J. B. Shakerly, Marmion, Thomas Brewer, J. T. (John Taylor), and Thomas Heywood." Calder doesn't give any of the verses. You have now the whole matter before you, as well as if you had seen the volume.

You drive me very hard about Allan, and none of your pungent sentences shall be lost in the quoting passages of my answer. But I dare not say more at present, for I am running a race with the press; though I can never deny myself the opportunity of having a bit of chat with you somehow.—Ever truly,

L. H.

Kensington, 13th January, 1844.

My dear Ollier,—I cannot suffer you to write to Vincent such a letter as the one that has come this morning, and not hasten to say that I never felt, for one moment, any such objectionableness in anything you have said about A. R. as what you too sensitively and modestly suppose. You have as much right to express yourself heartily on such subjects as any man I know, as I never saw anything in the vivacity of your expressions except said heartiness, or a strong pouring forth of what you thought on the matter,—a little strong perhaps in the amount of the expression, owing to the earnestness of the speaker, and perhaps to a little hereditary French vivacity in his blood, but all very pleasant to *my* mind, and not even unwelcome to my self-love, in its consanguineousness with my own semi-tropical vein; for I come, you know, still farther south, out of Barbadoes; and have the reputation among my friends of pushing matters very earnestly in discourse; albeit I have burnt my fingers in life with the tips of such very red-hot matters, "delicate in the handling," that

burnt-childism (to use a "Huntism") has begotten in me a temperance never needed by yourself. So pray continue to express yourself, now and at all times, according to your impulses. I assure you, you talk about Allan so well as to put me to all my trumps to answer you; and I shall think myself lucky if I (in your opinion) get decently well through the argument. Vincent thanks you very much for the honour you have done him in addressing such a letter to him about his father, however unfounded in the necessity; and I am ever, my dear Ollier, your respectful and affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

FROM CHARLES OLLIER.

Hayes Place, Lisson Grove, 1st February, 1844.

MY DEAR HUNT,—Conceive with what delight I read your very friendly controversy with me in Ainsworth's *Magazine*, how I throbbed at seeing the excessively flattering things you have said of me, and at the handsome manner in which you have given me the *coup de grace*. I will not say a word more on the subject till you and I meet, except just to hint that I cannot feel the excellence even of the passages you quote. "The lily wet with dew," is an arrant and most venerable commonplace. I ought not to wonder at your good-nature after you have been so good-natured to *me;* but I cannot help giving you credit for a prodigiously catholic extension of it, when you can find anything to admire in the proposal of one girl to another that they should go and "*wash themselves!*" I humbly opine these are not things to talk about, and that the Muse would repudiate them. I love and deeply reverence the precept that "true affection loatheth nicer hands;" but, then, "affection" *must* be involved, or else the disdain of nicety is not nice; and no "affection" can be displayed in one woman telling another she is going to cleanse her skin. If you are not tired of me, we'll discourse some

evening—hob-and-nob—about the other verses, with their expletives both of words and thought.

Your translation from Theocritus is glorious; and (great as may be the praise) you have never written more nobly than in your grand speculations about Ætna. Although you have given my self-love many precious reasons to be grateful to Ramsay, I cannot help imploring you to close the Scotchman's book, and look into the exhaustless treasures of your own intellect and imagination.—I remain, my dear Hunt, affectionately yours,

CHAS. OLLIER.

What a magnificent conception is that about Ætna, during some mighty antediluvian convulsion, heaving itself into the air, with all Sicily hanging at its root!

To CHARLES OLLIER.

Kensington, 3rd February, 1844.

MY DEAR OLLIER,—I snatch a moment to say how delighted I am with *your* delight, and to thank you for every word of your too grateful and modest, but still most welcome letter. As soon as I have made one other visit, which I have still longer owed, and which fifty things have daily conspired tormentingly to delay, I will be in Hayes Place, in the midst of your books, and then we will have our happy fight out respecting our "barefoot beauties."—Ever affectionately yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

Kensington, 7th May, 1844.

MY DEAR OLLIER,—The only note on the passage, in Todd's edition, is from the pen of Upton, and is herewith copied verbatim:—

"*When oblique Saturne sate in the house of agonyes.*"

The aspect of Saturn by astrologers was always deemed

malignant, *impio Saturno*, as Horace, alluding to this opinion, says (L. ii. v. xvii). And Chaucer calls him "pale Saturnus the cold" (K. T. 2445).

> "I do vengeance, and plain correction,
> While I dwell in the house of the Lyon—
> My looking (*i. e.* aspect) is father of pestilence."

This, I suppose, will be all you want. The allusion, you see, is not mythological, except inasmuch as the mythology of ancient times was brought to bear on the astrology of modern. Saturn had a bad character with the astrologers; so, to be born under his planet was a bad *look-out*, especially, it seems, when it was in the sign of Leo. What is specifically meant by the word "agonies" (if anything at all but a lucky and strong suggestion of the rhyme) I know not. Agony literally means contest, struggle, or wrestle; and hence, by a fine metaphor, the fiercest part of suffering.

(There is a little spider drinking, at the top of this page, a drop of water which has fallen from some flowers which I have been taking out of a glass. It was bigger than himself. He has half swallowed it, and is now walking off to my blotting-paper, evidently refreshed. It is so seldom one catches a spider at any work so pleasant, that I have thought fit to tell you. I once saw, however, a mother spider evidently playing with one of her young. It ran backwards and forwards to her, as a kitten does to a cat.)

If you happen to have an old *Moore's Almanack*, he will soon induct you into the forms of astrology. His verses on the signs of the Zodiac, and their sympathies with the various regions of the human body, ought to be immortal, if only for one line, so touchingly descriptive of maiden modesty, viz.:—

> "The *bashful* virgin *claims* the belly parts."

(The spider has got under the shade of a curl-up of the edge of the blotting-paper, and there seems gone to sleep after his flowery potation.)—Ever heartily yours,

L. H.

P.S.—Herewith comes a book, on the strength of which Mrs. Hunt begs you will send her the first edition of *Captains Sword and Pen.* Ainsworth has given me a glorious friendly *blowing-up.*

Besides *Pen and Sword* (no, no, I now recollect it is *Palfrey*), will you let the bearer have Landor's *Pentameron?* I want to quote something about Dante from him, and you shall have it again.

We are all convalescent, but weak as water—most of us. All chance of "infection" has gone, Dr. S. S. says, "if ever there was any:" so you need not fear the book for your household.

Wimbledon, 19th August, 1846.

My dear Ollier,—Though I cannot but feel flattered by your very complaint of me, since it is of a loving nature, yet you were quite wrong in going away that evening; you were indeed; and I have been coming to you a hundred times to say so, but have been prevented by all kinds of cross purposes. Thornton happened to be with me on that occasion, on very particular family business; but I was saying every five minutes, "Good God! there is Ollier in the next room; I must go to him, if it is only to let him know I am coming." Then Thornton would say to me, "One moment—I can't stop more than a few minutes longer;" and then we got earnestly talking again—and then I again started up—and then you, you villain, glided away, as if you hadn't known me forty years; and so I became a criminal, who meant you nothing but kindness and apologies. Well, now, isn't this enough? and won't you consent, at all events, to share the blame with me, like a loving friend?—for this is all, surely, that loving friends desire. If not, I will take all the burden upon myself, and then where are you, and how would you feel? Horribly light, and superior, and uncomfortable: your friend toiling along, burdened, by your side; and you secretly longing to say *Peccavi*, and go share and share alike with the honest old, frail, bent, human companion.

Ollier (*starting up in his turn*) :—

> "No more, Hunt. Say no more. I'll go with thee
> To the last gasp of common *burdenry*."

What does that remind you of? You remember poor Graham and the "knockery belliness?"

Well, as you have made this vow like an honest and right Ollier, pray come and see us here as speedily as you can, and let us have a day of grass-lounging, and old-house-gazing, and Cowleyfying—for all which Wimbledon is well fitted. You know how glad my wife will be to see you. We are in lodgings, right opposite the gate of the lime-treed school, which is next door to the Rose and Crown. I send a battered paper about the *railroad;* the *coach* passes the end of your street, not before two, but not much after, and would set you down at the inn at half-past three; *and I can* give you a bed. Mind, that I am *not* sure of being at home to-morrow; and on Sundays there is generally a young friend or two of Vincent's with us (if you care about visitors); but on Friday and Saturday, and Monday next, and Tuesday, and every other week-day, as far as I know at present, we shall be quite alone, and most happy to see you. Love to Mrs. Ollier, and kindest remembrances to Edmund. Will he come with you? I need not say there is plenty of room for him, and plenty of welcome.—Ever dear Ollier's faithful old friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

P.S.—Thank you a thousand times for what you and he say about the verses. Where's my *Inesilla*, or when am I to have the new edition of that unique?

FROM CHARLES OLLIER.

Southampton Street, Strand,
5th January, 1847.

MY DEAR HUNT,—. . . . You wanted *two* volumes, I *know* you did, though you haven't said so. But then those dreadful people, the publishers! How many a good scheme

in literature have they not spoiled! Had you been free to work out your own project, you would have told us all about Bishop Hall, and his piquant Satires; and of his successor, Donne; and of *his* successor, Cowley, all masters of "wit," and fine exponents of it. Then you would have treated of the *wit* of Waller, and distinguished it from that of Rochester (I mean his *decent* wit); you would have talked to us about Sedley, and Prior, and Gay, and Churchill, and Cowper (the last was both wit and humourist; and no man but you could have shown us how his comic vein burst out from a ground of ghastly and maddening bigotry): then you would have given us a taste of inimitable Anstey, and of the strange and funny rhyming of Kane O'Hara.

"All round the may-pole how they trot!
Hot,
Pot,
And good ale have got.

"There is old Sileno frisks like a mad
Lad,
Glad
To see us sad.

"To my fair tulips
I glue lips.

"But, my sister,
Ah! he kissed her."

We should have flavoured Sheridan's songs in the *Duenna*, and the ludicrous eccentricities of Colman's *Broad Grins*, &c. . . . . Dear Hunt, yours affectionately,

CHARLES OLLIER.

To J. F.

32, *Edwardes Square, Kensington,*
Saturday, 20th June, 1840.

SOLILOQUY.

I wonder whether F. would give me a chop some day, or a bit of supper, and invite C., and D., and M., and Talfourd to

be of the party: for asking which I have a very particular and affectionate reason. Or I wonder whether he would rather give me a chop, first *tête-à-tête*, at the good old corner in Lincoln's Inn.

This is the first bit of writing I have put to paper since entering my new house, *No.* 32, *Edwardes Square, Kensington.*

LEIGH HUNT.

Kensington, 10th January.

. . . . I shall cherish the hope of the play's being only deferred; which indeed is possible, perhaps probable; though Phelps leaves the point in mysterious condition. But what a blessed thing not to be so anxious about it as I was! And what a beatitude to find myself, at last, actually paying as I go, and incurring no more bills! I hardly seem to have yet recovered the delightful stunning of the security and the silence! I received yesterday another letter from Lord John, most pleasant and friendly—in reply to my final acknowledgment. He again speaks of my writing in the *Edinburgh Review*, and tells me that Prince Albert expressed to him "great admiration" of the *Legend of Florence*. All this seats me on a very flourishing hill-top of security and self-complacency,

"Above the smoke and stir of that dim spot,"

which men call dunning. . . . . Believe me ever, my dear friend, affectionately yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

Kensington, 9th December.

I was not satisfied with my account of the *Angel of Death* in the blank verses, especially after the wish you expressed that more should have been said of the horror of his advent: so to give myself altogether a fresh feeling on the subject, I have put the legend into a rhyme; of which I beg your acceptance. You shall lose nothing by it, when I complete the blank verses: I mean, you that have something *terribly* worth telling,—something perhaps which you once told me

yourself, like that tremendous passage in Middleton. Meantime receive this kindly; and when I see you, tell me that I do not think too much of it in fancying it is worth something. But don't write. You know what a horror I have of forcing people to write thanks for my sendings. You must know, that never finding it possible to cease writing verse of some sort or other, I am concocting, at precious, at delicious intervals, between conclusions of compilations and memorandums for *Streets of London*, a little set of poems, none of which, I trust, will be inferior to the best of what I have written, and some I hope better than any. I shall condense and strengthen the *Walk and Dinner* among them, confining myself, I think, to the dinner, and so enlarging that. All that we say during the walk, we can then say better. Ever your affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

Kensington, 16th February.

Behold the face under the cowl.* May people (modest wish) read the verses a hundred years hence, and think of you and me together.

When I sent you the MS. of the book on Saturday, I forgot, at the last moment, to alter the close of the remarks on De Foe; but not the less was the alteration intended. You were right on the point; and De Foe shall be treated, as he deserves to be, entirely like *De Friend*. Did you never feel the pleasure of dropping from the empyrean into a pun? . . . . . Ever dear F.'s most affectionate,

LEIGH HUNT.

Kensington, 11th April, 1845.

It is not the weather that has kept me, for there were some fine days: but in hastening my work, I did myself a mischief, and found I had been writing too soon. I was therefore

* Alluding to a poem called *The Inevitable*, inscribed to his correspondent.

obliged to take it very gently. I have finished, however, all I had to do out of Pulci, and am nearly in the middle of the critical notice; so that I have no doubt I shall be with you next week (how much I desire it!), and then I will pelt away as fast as need be, with the proofs.

The bearer brings the . . . and a loaf a little bigger than usual because you have so long been unable to "get your bread." We flatter ourselves that it does you good, and that you continue to get more pastoral or farm-house pleasure out of the taste of it. I read . . . as soon as you lent it me, and found it very clever, and *clasp-atory* (there is an alliteration and neologism for you to express a certain right-womanly quality), but fond, perhaps, of a *little* too much ferocity in return, a little gratuitous rascality and Mirabeauism. Seriously, the authoress is evidently a reflecting, as well as an impassioned woman, and seems to have written the book to vent all the feelings and thoughts that have gone through her since she began to think and be perplexed. The story is also very interesting for the greater part of the work, but falls off, or rather fairly lays one flat with its nothingness at the conclusion, so many nothings come of so many somethings. It is clear that she did not know what to do with the various events and characters which she had been creating.

When next you write, do not content yourself with asking after my health, but tell me of yours; otherwise, as the man in Hierocles said to the sick friend who *couldn't* speak to him, "Oh, very well" (in a *huff*), "when I am ill, and you come to see *me*, I'll not speak to *you*." Ever affectionately dear F.'s,

L. H.

Kensington, 15th June.

I will come by all means to dinner next Tuesday, and will be with you at the hour you mention,—half-past five. Only be kind enough not to speak of it generally,—I mean, if you should be in any large company meanwhile where I am known, and such a thing should happen to be talked off; for

though the usual summer mitigation of my cough has arrived, —doubly welcome for being late and unexpected,—I must be cautious of venturing out too much at once; and some of my friends seem to think that I have only to dine everywhere, if I would; which, however complimentary to the gaiety of my decrepitude, is unfortunately far too flattering to the reality of it, and sometimes gives me the most painful feelings. . . . . Your ever loving friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

Kensington, 6th August.

I am very sorry to hear you are so unwell; but no wonder, if you are often so hospitable and *noctantious*, as you were that last Saturday ("Noctante," the man in Spenser who "keeps it up o' nights"). I was startled, when I went away, to find myself issuing forth into the sweet reproach of the dawn. . . . . Ever dear F.'s affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

Kensington, 22nd October.

. . . . I have regularly read, hitherto, little more than half the first volume of the *Handbook of London*, but I have dipped here and there further on, and have made a very few mems. in both volumes. I send the books, however, in case they may be of use, and also three other sets of memorandums:—1st, the articles collected from the *Atlas*; 2nd, an alphabetical list of abodes; and 3rd, the rough draft of those and of others not included, all which are at Mr. ——'s service,—on this principle: that the loss of whatever he may have overlooked cannot be of much importance to a book of the nature of *my* "London," which goes upon other *grounds* (Hibernicè); whereas the necessity for precision and completeness in *his*, is everything; and a very excellent thing it is, and one moreover, of which all those who follow

him will freely avail themselves, myself among the number. So if he finds anything, let him pluck it all, and welcome, both for his book's sake and for F.'s sake.—Your affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

P.S.—I need not request him to be careful of my documents, especially as the printed one belongs to the bookseller.

Kensington, 13th August.

I loved that article, because it was so manifestly intended to comfort me, and do me good. It was not critical, much; nor did you intend it to be so; but that was no matter. People, I take it, always connect me in a sort of friendly way with the *Examiner;* and where I feel that the friendly critic neither omits me in his friendships, nor has any other desire while writing than to do me said comfort and good, I am always most thankful. Let me add, I am thankful, not only for my own sake, but his; and that a full good half of the pleasure arises from a sight of the hearty and handsome figure he cuts. Oh! if you knew all that I had *always* felt in this way, on matters of this and other sorts! But a final and crowning good-will is everything. As to criticism, truly, that is to say, subtilely, and searchingly, and judicially so called, with proofs and reasons for proofs (for a critic, you know, is a judge on the bench), it is a very terrible and elaborate matter, not to be expected every moment in hasty articles in newspapers even from the cleverest pens; and yet I must have it, good signor mio, even from a friend, before I be expected to be moved much by praise or blame, *accordingly; i.e.* agreeably to the *demands* of criticism; but an honest, understood desire to facilitate the publicity and prosperity of a friend and author, not in himself unknown or unwelcome to the public, is still an honest and a kindly thing, and no heart will say nay to it. As to "meeting," I go nowhere, see nobody, am scarcely ever in town, except for anniversaries of Exhibitions and National Galleries, *and dinings with F.*, but assuredly,

I will come and dine with him as soon as possible, and will call in Lincoln's-inn-fields the very first day I get as far as the bookseller's, and fix the day for a bit of "reason"—beef-steak—and "flow of soul;" being F.'s ever affectionate friend,

L. H.

Wimbledon, 15th June, 1846.

F. MO,—It has come across me while contemplating the possible beatific vision of a pension, that perhaps the following memorandums might not be without service to your kind zeal, in furnishing you with an additional argument or so:—

1. That what with charges pursued and *withdrawn*, I had *many* prosecutions against me. I daren't say *how* many, for I forget; but Government paid nothing even for what it withdrew, while law charges are always costly to the defending parties, and the general result was, that these prosecutions, together with the imprisonment, cost *me* alone, in the long run (setting aside my brother), fifteen hundred pounds, on a rough recollection; for I have not papers here by me. Think of the consequence of this money to a man who never scarcely had a guinea to spare, and (as Macaulay said to Lord Melbourne) of the interest of it for the space of upwards of thirty years.

2. That I declined receiving a public subscription for these sums.

3. That I declined an offer brought me by the friend of a *friend* of the Prince Regent (on the Prince's part) to drop proceedings against the *Examiner*, if I would promise to take no notice of him in future.

4. That I also declined an offer made me by Mr. Perry, of the *Chronicle*, at the last moment just before going to prison, of a copy of the famous hushed-up "Book," on the ground that I did not like to mix up such matters with my conduct, lest I should hurt its reputation for single-mindedness, and so injure a political principle.

5. That I was one of the few journalists who kept alive

the little taper of Reform, when everybody was attempting to blow it out, *Whigs and all!* (only this last mem. might be awkward).

6. That I have lived to see almost all the measures for which I fought and suffered, secured one after the other, and become conventional prosperities and honours, Reform, Catholic Emancipation, Free Trade, Enlarged Liberal Discussion on all Subjects, &c.

7. That meanwhile I have become, under the most unfavourable circumstances resulting from these struggles, a litterateur of acknowledged universality, of good-will and good effect (mayn't I say so?), and one whom all parties would be willing to see made easy. God bless dear F. and his efforts for his affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

P.S.—I have not mixed up my brother with these remarks, because though he was equally conterned with myself in the *Examiner*, and latterly more so, he retired from the paper with greater advantages, and also puts no claim forward.

[8. That I have nothing in the world in case of illness, but the annuity of 100*l.* which I receive from my friend, Sir Percy Shelley.]

[9. That I since declined applications of friends and *others* to Sir R. Peel.]

Wimbledon, 27th June, 1846.

. . . . The arrangement with Mr. Williams has been *re*-arranged in the nicest manner possible, and therefore I shall have the happiness of refreshing myself with your society in the little room overlooking the most private of public gardens under the auspices of the despotic Souster, whom I will accordingly enjoin to be ready with his dinner at four.

I shall look for you of course somewhat before that time. The sooner the better. I don't know whether they are Christian enough in the village to allow us a game at baga-

telle before dinner, but we will try. What pastime can be more smooth and peaceful? what rolling orbs jar into a more edifying state of final tranquillity? The despot says that I and mine may come in whenever we like, and play for nothing; but I haven't yet had the face to avail myself of the licence. Non-payment somehow appears impracticable in inns; and in such a snug inn, even ungrateful. So I pass his door with sighs, and disrespect myself for my want of courage.—Most affectionately dear F.'s,

L. H.

Wimbledon, 4th July, 1846.

. . . . I cannot express the pleasure your letter has given me. I do not think you at all "wild" at Wimbledon, except inasmuch as a man ought to be, were it for nothing but the sake of so pleasant an alliteration. I think you immensely reasonable and *cultivated* at Wimbledon, and rejoice to have found at the core of all your other qualities the true *inn*-ward light.

Seriously, I cannot overrate the comfort these meetings have given me, crowned and completed as it is with your own enjoyment of them. When I find myself in the little room, with the window open, and the garden before us, and a glass of claret on the table, care seems excluded; or, at least, if the sigh will come, I am surprised afterwards to think how briefly it stayed—how I contrived to shut it out again, as I would an east wind. We then surely want no one besides ourselves. And yet if you mention ——, why, then indeed it is adding satisfaction to satisfaction; and I shall think of us three a hundred times between this and to-morrow. I will tell the tyrant immediately.

L. H.

Wimbledon, Thursday.

A second letter, my dear friend, this morning, which of course always brings with it some sort of astonishment. But I have just this instant seen the *E*——, and cannot delay

thanking you for the distinction you have drawn between the Henry Hunts and Leigh Hunts. It is a thing I have for years wished to be done, but one could not ask it. So much the more delightful for its being done unasked. And it comes so opportunely, too, at this moment. I had just been reading the excellent article in the *Daily News* on pensions; and this memorandum came somehow most prettily at the top of it—like a cake made of the pastry on a pie.

God bless you, dear F., prays your affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

Wimbledon, 3rd August, 1846.

. . . Of the two proposed books, respecting which you ask me the particulars, one is *The Fabulous World*, the chief portion of which, though not under that title, or, indeed, under *any general* one, appeared many years ago in the *New Monthly Magazine*, as articles on Satyrs, Nymphs, Giants, Mermaids, &c. They were written with my customary painstaking, interspersed with quotations from poets of divers languages (translated when necessary), and very much approved. Everybody, to whom their incorporation into a volume was talked of, seemed to hail the notion; and, in truth, there is no such book in the language, nor, I believe, in any other. I propose to complete what was wanting to it in the *New Monthly*, and to add the miraculous goods and chattels belonging to my fabulous people, such as Enchanted Spears, Flying Sophas, Illimitable Tents that pack up in nutshells, &c. And as such a book eminently, I think, demands to be made a *picture*-book, and pictures of such things abound in the great painters, I would undertake to procure engravings after Raphael, Giulio Romano, the Caracci, and others, for the purpose of being copied for the work; which alone would be an attraction to it in these pictorial days, and assuredly a genuine and graceful novelty.

The other book (now in the act of formation) has not yet got a title—no very easy thing, you know, to get, though a pretty difficulty to hunt after. I wish we could engage a

certain ducal taste in the search, especially as it is about houses and gardens. Perhaps, Mr. Paxton might hit on a name for it. It includes the sort of book that Sir Egerton Brydges wished to see published—a collection of passages out of Cowley, the Sir Roger de Coverley papers in the *Spectator*, and other such amenities of our grandfathers, connected with *old country houses* and *quiet thoughts*; and, generally speaking, it would run altogether, more or less, in those two directions, but aggravated with pleasing terrors of haunted houses and other passages of terror, such as the fragment of Sir Bertrand, and Smollett's account of Fathom's adventure in the lone cottage. Some of the exquisite letters of *Gray* will be in it; nor shall lighter, though still solid, matter be wanting, especially the divine dialogue between the worthy Mr. Peter Pounce and that elderly cherub with a mutton fist, Parson Adams. In short, it is to be a sort of *sequestered* book, yet so far reminiscent of town and human life in general, as men of catholic tastes would wish it to be. It begins with Shenstone's *Schoolmistress*, will end with *Gray's Elegy*, and I propose to stuff all the intermediate portion with fine old relishing things, such as F. and H. delight to call to mind while taking "their *ease at their inn*"—mark that—as full of rich but wholesome unction as possible, and fitted for the innocentest palates by the balms and minds of rustical recollection. Will you be its godfather, and find a name for it? As to the booksellers, if they won't have it, why, they don't know their own good, that's all; but it's a book that I have sworn to do for these ages past, long before poor Sir Egerton spoke of it. I can't help thinking he got the notion from some public mention by myself; though, in truth, he had a bit of a genuine sequestered head of his own, had he possessed but good fortune enough to know it. However, what I was going to say is, that I should, and shall, do the book, at all events, for my own private eating, whether the booksellers take to the dish or not. I tell my wife that I absolutely envy her the writing it out; and that if pension and cottage are never to be realized by us, after all (which, however, I will not

believe), it will not be among the least of my consolations to have that book constantly lying before me, reminding me of a hundred pleasant places of thought, and helping to embalm and keep gentle the most painful that may be still to go through. Here is a very grave termination all of a sudden! But it suits the book, and me too just now, and, indeed, all of us always, provided friendship and comfort be uppermost.—Thine, therefore, kind and comfortable F., for ever,

LEIGH HUNT.

P.S.—Don't suppose I am "grave" in any sense to be over sympathized with. I have been learning patience all my life, by the beautiful light of natural good spirits; and I have not the least suspicion that it will ever forsake me.

Wimbledon, 11th and 12th August, 1846.

. . . . I find I made a great confusion of my *portion* of the legal expenses incurred by the *Examiner*, with the *whole* of them. That portion only amounted to 750*l.*, the whole being 1,500*l.* Of this 750*l.* out of my pocket (which was quite enough), 250*l.* went to pay for expenses (counsel, &c.) attendant on the *failure* of two Government prosecutions, —one for saying (*totidem verbis*) that "of all monarchs since the Revolution, the successor of George the Third would have the finest opportunity of becoming nobly popular;" (think, now-a-days, of being prosecuted for *that!*) and the other for copying from the *Stamford News* the paragraph against military flogging, alluded to the other day in the *Daily News*. (Think, now, this moment, of being prosecuted for THAT!) The 500*l.* fine and two years' imprisonment was for ludicrously contrasting the *Morning Post's* picture of the Regent as an "Adonis," &c., with the old and real fat state of the case, and for adding that his Royal Highness had lived for "upwards of half a century without doing anything to deserve the admiration of his contemporaries or the gratitude of posterity." Words to that effect, and I believe better,—but I do not quite remember them. They might be easily ascertained

by reference to Peel's Coffee-house, and the words of the *Post*, too.

Besides the fine, my imprisonment cost me several hundred pounds (I can't exactly say how many) in monstrous *douceurs* to the gaoler for *liberty to walk in the garden*, for help towards getting me permission to fit up rooms in the sick hospital, and for fitting up said rooms, or rather converting them from sorts of washhouses, hitherto uninhabited and unfloored, into comfortable apartments,—which I did too expensively,—at least as far as papering the sitting-room with a trellis of roses went, and having my ceiling painted to imitate an out-of-door sky. No notice, however, could be taken, I suppose, of any of *this* portion of the expenses, governments having nothing to do with the secret corruptions of gaolers or the pastorals of incarcerated poets: otherwise the prosecutions cost me altogether a good bit beyond a thousand pounds.

But perhaps it might be mentioned that I went to prison from all but a sick bed, having been just ordered by the physician to *go to the sea-side*, and *ride* for the benefit of my health (pleasing dramatic contrast to the *verdict!*) I also declined, as I told you, to try avoiding the imprisonment by the help of Perry's offer of the famous secret "Book;" and I further declined (as I think I also told you) to avail myself of an offer on the part of a royal agent (made, of course, in the guarded, though obvious manner in which such offers are conveyed), to drop the prosecution, provided we would agree to drop all future hostile mention of the Regent. But of this, too, governments could not be expected to take notice—perhaps would regard it as an addition to the offence. This, however, I must add, that the whole attack on the Regent was owing, not merely to the nonsense of the *Post*, but to his violation of those promises of conceding the Catholic claims, to which his princely word stood pledged. The subject of the article was the "Dinner on St. Patrick's-day." All the Whig world was indignant at that violation: so were the Irish, of course, *vehemently*; and it was on the spur of this publicly indignant movement that I wrote what I did,—as angrily and as much in

earnest in the serious part of what I said as I was derisive in the rest. I did not care for any factious object, nor was I what is called anti-monarchical. I didn't know Cobbett, or Henry Hunt, or any demagogue, *even* by *sight*, except Sir Francis Burdett, and him by sight alone. Nor did I ever see, or speak a word with them, afterwards. I knew nothing, in fact, of politics themselves, except in some of those large, and, as it appeared to me, obvious phases, which, at all events, *have since become obvious to most people*, and in fighting for which (if a man can be said to fight for a "phase!") I suffered all that Tories could inflict upon me,—by expenses in law and calumnies in literature;—reform, Catholic claims, free trade, abolition of flogging, right of free speech, as opposed by attorneys-general. I was, in fact, all the while nothing but a poetic student, appearing in politics once a week, but given up entirely to letters almost all the rest of it, and loving nothing so much as a book and a walk in the fields. I was precisely the sort of person, in these respects, which I am at this moment. As to George the Fourth, I aided, years afterwards, in publicly wishing him well—"years having brought the philosophic mind." I believe I even expressed regret at not having given him the excuses due to all human beings (the passage, I take it, is in the book which Colburn called *Lord Byron and his Contemporaries*); *and when I consider that Moore has been pensioned, not only in spite of all his libels on him, but perhaps by very reason of their Whig partizanship, I should think it hard to be refused a pension purely because I openly suffered for what I had earnestly said.* I knew George the Fourth's physician, Sir William Knighton, who had been mine before I was imprisoned (it was *not* he who was the royal agent alluded to); and, if my memory does not deceive me, Sir William told me that George had been gratified by the book above mentioned. Perhaps he had found out, by Sir William's help, that I was not an ill-natured man, or one who could not outlive what was mistaken in himself or resentful in others. As to my opinions about Governments, the bad conduct of the Allies, and of Napoleon, and the old

Bourbons, certainly made them waver as to which might be ultimately best, monarchy or republicanism ; but they ended in favour of their old predilections; and no man, for a long while, has been less a republican than myself, monarchies and courts appearing to me salutary for the good and graces of mankind, and Americanisms anything but either. But nobody, I conceive, that knew my writings, or heard of me truly from others, ever took me for a republican. William the Fourth saw or heard nothing of me to hinder his letting Lord Melbourne give me 200*l.* out of the Royal Fund. Queen Victoria gave me another, through the same kind friend. She also went twice to see my play ; and everybody knows how I praise and love her. *I do not think, therefore, in reference to the pension, that the public would care twopence about George the Fourth one way or the other; or that if any remembered the case at all, they would connect the pension in the least with anything about him, but attribute it solely to the Queen's and Minister's goodness, and the wants of a sincere and not undeserving man of letters, distinguished for his loyal attachment.* I certainly think the 500*l.* fine ought not to have been taken out of my pocket, or the other two 125*l.* either ; and I think also, that a liberal Whig minister might reasonably and *privately* think some compensation on those accounts due to me. *I have been fighting his own fight from first to last, and helping to prepare matters for his triumph.* But still the above, in my opinion, is what the public would think of the matter, *and my friends of the press could lay it entirely to the literary account.*

With regard to those wants, and to my annuity of 120*l.* from Sir Percy Shelley, the case is this: I have never been able to get in advance of them, partly from constant fluctuations of health, more from irregularities of employment. You know how I lost my part proprietorship in the *Examiner*, in consequence of its decay during Tory ascendancy, and the results of the bankruptcy of my brother's son. We all lost it. The booksellers bowed me out of their shops in those days, as much as they are now willing to bow me in. I was too sincere

in my writings, took too much pains with them, and (let me add) was a little too refined and *few-addressing* in my taste, to get much way with editors of magazines. My health was so bad for years, that I could not write more than half an hour or so at a time, in consequence of what is called a tendency of blood to the head. It is far better (in *this* respect) now, but still it is more subject to fluctuation than my animal spirits would lead people to imagine; and at sixty-two years of age it is not likely to get very strong. I never make the worst of it, or of any other suffering, as I am sure you must have perceived; but this will do me no harm with generous men. My pecuniary difficulties, acquainted with them as you are, are often worse than you have any conception of, small as are my responsibilities in amount; and circumstances, just now, have aggravated them. I came, you know, to this place on account of a cough of some years' growth, which, the doctor said, "if I did not conquer it, would conquer me." Inability to pay up the expenses which the place has caused me (in combination with a house on hand) has forced me to stay ever since, to the advantage of my health, no doubt, but so much to the disadvantage of my purse, that I have been just now forced to apply to my friend, Sir Percy, for leave to draw a year's advance on the annuity, and am waiting his answer. (I wrote yesterday, compelled by my alarms.) I dare say he will oblige me, but you may imagine how anxious I shall be respecting the months to come. That annuity is given to myself, and to Mrs. Hunt after me! but it is not in any way secured or guaranteed. I receive it from quarter to quarter, by drawing for the quarter each time on the banker, in a form which places it to Sir Percy's account.

Pray, do not think ill of the hasty slovenliness of this writing, nor measure by it one bit of the sense I entertain of your deliberate zeal, my dear F., and great kindness. But I know you will not. You would hasten to reassure me in your heartiest and most deprecating manner, were I speaking *vivâ voce*. I had been occupied with other writing before I began; and when my head begins to feel what I am

about, my handwriting becomes small and rascally. I am busy with *Wit and Humour* proofs; and Mrs. Hunt has written 140 pages of the new selection I spoke of, which I long to talk to you more about; because the selection, modestly speaking, is an admirable selection, and a special private delight of mine, as I hope it will be to all gentle people. Ever, my dear friend, most affectionately yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

P.S.—With regard to poor unhappy ——, who caused me such perpetual grief and alarm, what am I to say? I can only feel fright to think of the use he might have made of my name, and to beg you to state what you know as strongly, and yet, somehow, as tenderly as you can.

I shall see you, however, to-morrow, and then will endeavour to collect my thoughts into any statement which you may think it will be proper to suggest. Any necessity of saying that I never authorized him to make any use of it whatever is, of course, out of the question. What horror!

Twelve o'clock.

. . . . I have just read of poor Haydon! how dreadful! how *astonishing!* for he is one of the last men of whom I should have expected such a thing. I looked upon him as one who turned disappointment itself to a kind of self-glory,—but see how we may be mistaken. Poor fellow! but then, poor *family!* That is the worst.

FROM J. F.

1*st March*, 1848.

In your *Wit and Humour*, you say that Burke's digestion was delicate, and cold mutton his favourite dish. (In reference to Goldsmith's line.) Can you tell me your authority for this? I have always thought the

"Eat mutton cold,"

simply meant that the talking beyond the dinner hour, going

on conversing while the rest were for dining, always led to his own mutton being cold when he got home to eat it.

Give me a word as to this. What events in France! What a sublime attitude (hitherto) that of the French people! May they continue in it. *Vive la République!*

What one is doing seems insignificant enough in the midst of this rocking to and fro of peoples, and tumbling down of thrones. But the little survives the great, after all—as the great can only exist by reason of it.

To J. F.

Kensington, 3rd March, 1848.

I am so busy that I dare not write more than a word or two in answer to your note. The prosaical, not merely poetical, fact of Burke's eating cold mutton, I have the strongest feeling of having read in some account of him, and indeed am as certain of it as I can be of anything for which I cannot give chapter or verse. He had a very irritable stomach, which helped to stimulate and to subtilize his intellect. Perhaps Madame D'Arblay was my authority, if Prior was not, or Bisset, or M'Cormack. It is not in Boswell, nor the *General Biography*.

The state of things in France is DIVINE. The Americans hindered me from being a republican; but I am one, in spite of pension, Queen, and all, when I read every day what these glorious men are doing. How I long every morning for the paper, and how I tremble lest any secret enemy to the cause should succeed in making a disturbance! All which I ever believed in, and struggled for, seems to be seating itself on the throne of the world. Why did not Shelley live to see it? But perhaps he does see it, unless he is too busy some ninety-nine thousand millions of miles off. Ever most affectionately yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

Kensington, 17th October, 1848.

. . . . I enclose a copy, which you will be glad to see, of Prince Albert's reply to my application through Mr. Anson. It postpones, indeed, the *thing*, but it promises it, and in the pleasantest manner; and what particularly delighted me, the Queen has unexpectedly joined in the promise; for I made no application to her, nor thought of it. You may guess that I have been very thankful. I shall still apply, however, in other quarters, where the turns of appointment may come quicker: nor would the kind royal people, of course, object to my so doing. Colonel Phipps also was very quick and courteous.

Mrs. Gore (delightful woman) told Ollier the other day, that she absolutely shed tears of regret and vexation when she received the altered edition of the *Story of Rimini*.—Ever affectionately yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

FROM G. E. ANSON.

Windsor Castle, 14th October, 1848.

SIR,—I beg to inform you that Colonel Phipps has forwarded your letter to the Prince, and his Royal Highness has desired me to say in reply to it, that it would have given him great pleasure on every account to nominate your brother to a Poor Brothership of the Charter House; but his Royal Highness has promised his next turn to a very excellent man, the late secretary to the Lock Hospital, who is disabled after many years of servitude.

The Queen has unfortunately had her turn of appointment, so that I fear all that can be done is to put your brother's name down until their turn of appointment again comes round. I can only say it would have given the Queen or the Prince great pleasure to have done what you wish.—I am, sir, your most obedient servant,

G. E. ANSON.

To J. F.

Kensington, 25th February.

On awaking in bed this morning (a fine fresh time for making corrections), I saw instantly, that your objection to the word "bass" was right. Be good enough, therefore, to change it to "voice."

"I hear the deep voice of a grief divine."

"Deep voice," you see, will imply all the contralto I want; and "voice" is a fine affecting word always,—full of humanity. It is *vaulted void;* the hollowness of a cathedral, with a breath in it.

How beautifully you read my verses last night, and how comfortable we all were! I took to Spenserian P. mightily; and W.'s face is good nature itself standing in front of intelligence. Ever affectionately,

LEIGH HUNT.

Kensington, 8th July.

. . . . I rejoice at the glad time you have passed in Belgium, and at your pictorial fervours. No man can carry them too far for me, or be too grateful (can he?) for such beauteous blessings to the world. Lord Byron once wrote me a letter from the same country, in which he pronounced "Reubens" to be "a dauber." He knew so little of pictures, that you see he had not even read enough about the very names of the artists to be able to spell them. Strange! that such a genius and poet should be cut off from one such great ground of sympathy with the beautiful and glorious. But Wordsworth, I am told, does not care for music! And it is very likely, for music (to judge from his verses) does not seem to care for him. I was astonished the other day, on looking in his works for the first time after a long interval, to find how deficient he was in all that may be called the musical side of a poet's nature,—the genial, the animal-spirited or bird-like,—the happily accordant. Indeed he does not appear to me, now, more than half the man I once took him for,

when I was among those who came to the "rescue" for him, and exaggerated his works in the heat of "reaction." . . . . Ever, dear F., affectionately yours, L. H.

Kensington, 9th July.

. . . . . Wordsworth is indeed "cold and diffuse," notwithstanding "all the fine things" which, you justly add, he contains. He seems to like nothing heartily, except the talking about it; and is in danger of being taken by posterity (who will certainly never read two-thirds of him) for a kind of puritan retainer of the Establishment, melancholy in his recommendations of mirth, and perplexed between prudence and pragmaticalness, subserviency and ascendancy, retrospection and innovation. I should infallibly (or far as lay in my power) have deposed the god I helped to set up, and put Coleridge in his stead (I mean in the last edition of the *Feast of the Poets*), but I did not like to hurt his feelings in his old age.

L. H.

Kensington, Saturday.

. . . . . I lose a great pleasure in not being able to go with you to the opera to-night. . . . . .

Think of my never having yet seen Jenny Lind! I, who have a special love for charming women who are not handsome, and also feel a particular vocation for the enjoyment of music! So, you see, I take it out in the injured vanity of my competency. I suppose I shall see her in the next world, where of course I shall sit in the "pit" (Dante's), and have the satisfaction of beholding the Duke of Wellington, a hook-nosed old angel, in the stage-box. Your affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

Monday, 16th September.

Clara's name is on the tip-end of my tongue, yet I cannot call it to mind, and I have looked in vain through some books. The verses in the Foundling Hospital, for instance (which I

have), have no note; and Dodsley's collection (which I have lent, and which contains them also) is a very bald book in that way. Does not Cooke tell you? I recollect that she arrived at the dignity of being entitled "Miss," and also a touching story of her which I suppose you know; viz. that she came into Bolingbroke's room one day, threw down a purse, and exclaiming,—"There are my wretched earnings, take 'em, and God bless you," ran in tears away.

I have consulted, in vain, Chalmers, Spence, Lady M. W. Montague, Lady Suffolk, and Nicholas's collection, where there is a notice of Bol.—but no mention of *her*. My Walpole's letters I have unfortunately lent, but I cannot help thinking there must be some mention of her there, for I met with one, not long ago. Perhaps it was in Jesse's *Courts of England*. I will look further; and if I find, send.

A great many thanks for the book, which I need not say I will devoutly keep, and keep clean. I send you, as you desired, a list of the rest (including the *Arrivabene*), but *also* need not say that they await the entire leisure and convenience of the customs in this case made and provided. *I haven't had two such vital evenings as last week, Heaven knows when.* Ever affectionately yours,

L. H.

From Lord John Russell.

Downing Street, 22nd June, 1847.

Sir,—I have much pleasure in informing you that the Queen has been pleased to direct that, in consideration of your distinguished literary talents, a pension of Two Hundred Pounds yearly should be settled upon you from the funds of the Civil List.

Allow me to add, that the severe treatment you formerly received, in times of unjust persecution of liberal writers, enhances the satisfaction with which I make this announcement.—I have the honour to be, sir, your faithful servant,

J. Russell.

To Lord John Russell.

Kensington, 24th June, 1847.

My Lord,—Being anxious not to delay the expression of my gratitude; but, at the same time, living very much out of the world, and not being sure whether it would be proper in me to address a letter to the Queen personally as well as to yourself, I beg, through your Lordship's medium, to lay my humblest duty at her Majesty's feet, with heartfelt acknowledgments of the blessing which the Royal goodness has been pleased to bestow on me. The example which her Majesty sets in the domestic as well as patriotic virtues, encourages me to state, by way of rendering my thanks as acceptable to that goodness as I can, that the pension has made a house full of loyal and loving people very happy, and I think it will bless, and, I believe, extend, the remainder of a father's days.

That your Lordship should have been pleased to take such an interest in my welfare, and to inform me of the result of it in terms of so much kindness and consideration, particularly in reference to times gone by, excites a gratitude in me only second to that which is inspired by her Majesty's graciousness. I am proud, indeed, of being thus sympathized with by a Russell, and feel as if history itself were deigning to speak to me as a friend.

I have the honour to be, my Lord, with every sentiment of respect, your lordship's most obliged and affectionate servant,

Leigh Hunt.

To Walter Savage Landor.

Kensington, 14th November.

My dear Landor,—(For, after the most kind message you sent me through Forster, I feel that you will allow me to break through the formality of "Sir"),—I beg your acceptance of a book which it is no immodesty in me to say you *must* like, for many exquisite reasons, both poetical and *pictorial*. (Vide the

notion of a Spenser Gallery.) There is—for a wonder, as far as my impulses are concerned—no mention of yourself in it, the plan, as you will see by the preface, studiously omitting living poets; but I am glad you saw, and felt as I meant them, the various notices of you in the little edition of my poems; and I have a book in hand (Stories from the Italian Poets, with Notices, &c.), in which I made use of my beloved book the *Pentameron*, to aid me in some hearty knocks at the great but infernal Dante, whom I am inclined to worship one minute, and send to his own Devil the next. God bless you! If you can find a corner in your next letter to Forster to say you have received and relished my Spenserisms, you cannot conceive the pleasure it will give me. Ever most sincerely yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

To HORATIO SMITH.

Kensington, 28th June [1847].

MY DEAR HORACE,—I owe you God knows how many apologies for not having sooner returned the enclosed; especially as from one passage in your letter (which, in the very confusion of my pleasure, I had not sufficiently attended to on my first perusal of it), I fear I may have put you to inconvenience in the completion of your article for the Magazine. If so, I hope I have suffered for it as I deserved, by your omission of the subject. But I have been *coming* to you every day since you were here, and every day have been prevented from doing so by a series of contretemps, chiefly owing to the whirls of congratulations and visits occasioned me by my piece of good fortune. Believe me, I have felt to my heart's core everything you have said about me; nor have I received one congratulation, out of the pale of my family, warm and welcome as they all were, which has moved me so deeply as yours. You once did me a princely service, which bound me so strongly to you for ever (not so much on account of its magnitude, as of the largeness of the heart that did it),

that although illness as well as other reasons kept me from showing you the face of an unprosperous man more than I could help, *you* were the friend of all others whom I loved best next to Shelley, and, since the death of Shelley, has occupied the first living place in my heart. When you lately came to town, I thought you had come "for good" (as they say); and I then said to myself,—Now, if my prosperity comes, I hope I shall be able to live near Horace Smith, and we will walk the old fields together till I die, and he shall learn (if he chooses to know it) how closely the idea of him has ever been bound up with my thoughts, though for years we have so lived apart. And now the prosperity comes, but the friend goes back to Brighton. Well! at all events, he knows what I feel, and his own sincerity will make him believe in mine, and he must not trouble himself to answer this letter; because powerlessness of deeds has made me, in my time, give into a more romantic strain of words than he deals in, and no words on his part are necessary to make me know him. I rejoice to have the poems. I shall read every bit of them, and be able to make use of them, as you will see. My daughters have already been laughing heartily over some, while I have been as seriously sympathizing with others. Some, I find, are old friends — always amiable and admirable — and make me doubly wish to read the rest. I do not know whether you ever saw the mention I made of you in the last collected edition of my verses. You once gave me a sort of rebuke for praising you, which frightened me for years into silence; so I never let you know, when at last I spoke, either on this or other occasions. But I shall have my revenge now that you devote such handsome recollections to *me*. I shall take my chance of finding you in Cumberland Street to-morrow, between two and three; and if forced to be from home, you must leave your forgiveness for me about the packet with your charming girls. Alas! I had flattered myself that while going into a little bigger house and little better accommodations, I should have a right to ask them to come and see me, and even prevailed, perhaps, on Mrs. Smith to do so, if I did not live very

far off; but you are all vanishing away, and with you some of my happiest lookings forward.

God bless you! dear Horace Smith, prays heartily your obliged and affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

Mrs. Hunt begs kindest remembrances.

FROM HORATIO SMITH.

Brighton, Friday night, 24th December, 1847.

MY DEAR HUNT,—Guess my surprise, when on cutting open your Christmas Book, which I have just purchased, I find it is dedicated to me!—a compliment most acceptable, and for which I beg you to accept my very best thanks. I cannot imagine anything more pleasant than to be thus embalmed in a *Jar of Honey*, and such honey and such a jar! I know not whether my spirit will be proud hereafter, but that I am somewhat proud in the flesh at present, while seeing my name thus honoured, I will not deny.

Some of the papers I think I have seen before, but all will bear many a new perusal.

From me and mine to thee and thine all cordial wishes for a merry Christmas are wafted, including, of course, our aspirations for happy new years.—I am, my dear Hunt, yours very truly,

HORATIO SMITH.

TO THE HONOURABLE MRS. E. J. STANLEY.

Kensington, 16th August.

DEAR MRS. STANLEY,—As you took some interest in the Chinese novel, and I happened to find one the other day upon a book-stall in a condition still more squalid than my own copy, I have put it into a very cheap but more decent trim, and take the liberty of begging you to accept it. Do not, pray, think it necessary to humiliate me with thanks for so

poor a gift. I shall leave the book at your door myself, and shall, therefore, be sure you have got it; and I owe far more to Mr. Stanley than I could pay if I sent you a book-case full. I thought to beg my duty to him at a moment when the smallest of such reminiscences might have had a little more grace; but delays occur in spite of us, and book-binders are careless of paltry orders; and when I saw what I did in the newspaper this morning, I said, "Ah! I shall seem to come among the shabby!" Yet, it is not so; I make up my mind that you will not think it so.

Let me add a hope that, as you are a reader of the *Edinburgh Review* and an admirer of the writings of Mr. Macaulay, and as we like to know good *things* of those whose writings we like, you retain enough regard for your visitor in Florence, to be glad to hear that Mr. Macaulay has been very kind to him; and among other *gentilezze*, introduced him to the *Review* itself. I wrote the article, in the last number, on the *Colman Family* (if you happen to have seen it, and to have been perplexed with the wording of any passage, be good enough to set it down to the account of mistakes of the press, for there were some terrible ones); and in the next number there will be an article of mine on the new book of Pepys, and in the number after that, one on Petrarch. Be so kind, if you think it worth while to let this mighty information transpire, to withhold it (except in your own family) till the said articles have appeared, as I do not know whether the ruling critical powers would approve such premature committals of the dignity and mystery of their "We." Dear Madam, with ever grateful remembrances to Mr. Stanley and yourself, and best respects to Lady Dillon, I am most truly your faithful servant,

LEIGH HUNT.

Wimbledon, 25th October.

MY DEAR MRS. STANLEY,—Behold another book! I will not hope that they don't annoy you, for if I thought they did, assuredly I should not send them; and besides, you tell

me the contrary. To account for the grand aristocratic sound of the place from which I date, you must know that I have been lodging here in a very humble abode to get rid of a cough. My cough has returned, and I am returning to Kensington accordingly. Meantime the little betterment in my fortunes, occasioned by an annuity of 120*l.*, has not hindered me from being still a struggling man, owing to obligations to discharge and repeated attacks of illness; so that I have reason to believe my friends have again begun to moot the question of a pension. I mention this because, should it fall into Mr. Stanley's way to drop a good word for me, I think I should not be without it. With best respects to Lady Dillon, believe me ever your most sincere, humble servant,

LEIGH HUNT.

FROM THE REV. FRANCIS S. MAHONY.

16, *Great Marlboro' Street*, 20*th May*, 1847.

MY DEAR MR. HUNT,—The other day (this day month) I spent some hours with Kirkup in Florence, and talked much of you and other pleasant subjects connected with the old Shelley period of literature and philosophy, winding up with a flask of Montepulciano, concerning which I need say nothing to the happy translator of Redi's dithyrambic, which you have truly rendered a "Redi made easy" for all Cockneydom.

I should not have bothered you about your old friend or about myself, knowing your time to be of such value, but on looking into two volumes freshly issued by you—and I never miss anything from that quarter—my vanity was fairly knocked on the head by an assertion which precedes your prose version of *Vert-Vert*. You "never heard or read" of a version in metre published in *Fraser* a dozen years ago, when that (barrel) organ was in full tune under Maginn's inspiration. I send you the version, which, singularly enough, anticipates your own idea of dividing the story into distinct *parts* with

distinct titles. You will say, if you read it, that it is rather impudent to call it a *translation*, but I have certain theories which I am prepared to defend on that topic; and I will ever maintain that the French phrase, *sacré bleu!* for instance, is not correctly translated by writing the English words "accursed blue;" the true version must necessarily be "Damn your eyes!" You have in this nutshell the whole theory in question.

An edition of a thousand copies of the book I send you has been long ago absorbed into the libraries of England and Ireland; but as Tom Moore, who figures also in the volume, has actually printed in his last issue of the *Melodies* that *he never heard* of any Latin or French translations of any songs of his, save some very poor attempts which he enumerates, omitting (as the *Athenæum* remarked on the subject) the part of Hamlet in that respect, you have a great precedent for ignoring the existence of my *Vert-Vert* without having the same paltry motive which I fear induced Tom to print what he knew to be a positive lie, for he both heard and sorely complained of the thing.

I make no apology for writing to you *freely*, as I know how you scorn humbug; and I hold valued recollections of a day's converse with you some years ago in some shady part of Chelsea, where I had the pleasure of paying you my sincere respects.—I am, dear Mr. Hunt, your admirer,

FRANK MAHONY.

TO THE REV. FRANCIS S. MAHONY.

32, *Edwardes Square, Kensington,*
21*st May*, 1847.

MY DEAR FRANK MAHONY (for your cordial letter encourages me to drop the Mr.),—You do me but justice in thinking that I had no recollection of your *Vert-Vert*. I never was in the habit of seeing *Fraser* regularly—sometimes was out of the way of him for ten or a dozen months together; and though I once had your book in my hand, and therefore

20167

could not have resisted the pleasure of looking into it, either my memory must be growing old indeed, or my time on the occasion must have been very brief, for I cannot call to mind the least recollection of the poem. Should my volumes reach a second edition, you will see how glad I shall be to add my tribute of admiration to the profusion of wit and scholarship that is in you. You recall some bright days in the midst of the black ones which I passed in beautiful Italy, when you speak of Kirkup and Redi. If you can find yourself in this quarter of the world at any hour before two in the afternoon, or after six in the evening, I should be happy to talk of them with you. Meantime, you must know that it was *there* also I made my version of Gresset, which appeared first in the *Examiner* upwards of twenty years ago.—With best thanks and kindest good wishes, believe me ever most truly yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

P.S.—I need not say how heartily I agree with you about the principles of translation.

To ROBERT BELL.

Kensington, 29th June [1842].

MY DEAR SIR,—Herewith comes to you (from the bookseller's, or I should have written in it) the little poem * which you were kind enough to ask me about, confident that your good-nature will let it down easily, should my vivacity while writing it turn out to have been something different from what the enjoyment of composition took it for. You will, at any rate (for I may speak of this, as it was not my own invention), relish the little natural incident which, at once so unlooked-for and so unlikely, restores the heroine to the arms of her lover. I think my greybeards in general may also amuse

* The *Palfrey*, afterwards included in the volume called *Stories in Verse*.—R. B.

you, and that you will not dislike the two contrasted progresses of King Edward through his town, and the lovers through their green lane. My moral, also, against marriages of old with young will surely be approved by your genial faculties. But, alas! whither am I running? With kindest remembrances, &c., ever truly yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

Kensington, 19th July [1842].

MY DEAR SIR;—The *Atlas's* time of arrival here varies, and I did not see your most kind and welcome notice till yesterday afternoon, when circumstances prevented my writing. Ever most kind, indeed, is your pen to me, and ever most grateful, believe me, am I. Your recognition, in this particular instance, of my *sunshine* (if it be not too vain to repeat such phrases) was specially welcome; because the critical literature of our "merry England" is not apt to have much of its own, and a *sad* dog in the *Morning Post* (who seems to be a good sort of dog, too, after his fashion, and to devour me with a kind of unwillingness) pronounces my sunshine, moonshine. Alas! if the gods had not been pleased to give me a good real batch of it, what would have become of my wintery fortunes?

And so you are indeed going to quit the *Atlas!—have* quitted it by this time! Sunshine has withdrawn in that quarter. Well, I am truly sorry for it; and so, I swear, will every one of your readers be; though many of them cannot have all the reasons that I have. With what sort of eye shall I look upon the *Atlas* of next week! I can only hope, either that you will soon reappear somewhere else, or that you have no necessity for reappearing except at your good leisure, and when it shall suit you to send down upon the natives your mingled ray of geniality, acuteness, brilliancy, and enlightenment. Besides, as I am in the habit of making the best of a bad thing, I shall now hope I shall be able to get you here some evening to take a bachelor lobster-salad with me,—unless poor Mrs. Hunt (who is truly your humble

servant) should be well enough by that time to attend to my visitors again. Might I ask you to write to me before long, and say that you will do so, in order that we may have a chat, and turn over a few books together? And when you come, or before, I will *now* venture to whisper into your ear, that a certain Robert Bell never favoured *me* with a copy of a certain play called *Marriage*, the consequence of which has been that, not having been able to go to the theatre in the time of its performance, I have, *in no manner whatever, had the good fortune to see it!* Think of this; and if a stray copy is to be found, let it find its way to the poor, and impudent, but loving pocket of yours most sincerely,

LEIGH HUNT.

Kensington, 19th July [1845].

MY DEAR BELL,—(For, with your permission, I think we might as well displace the cold "Sir" between us) I have been asked to interest myself in the welfare of a poor good woman, who . . . . and is in a fright at daily seeing her little capital fade away. . . . .

That was a good, hearty, brainy, valuable bit of existence you gave us the other night. Lord Rossmore, I see, is one of God Almighty's nobility, as well as man's—a right human being, thinking and feeling. I shall not soon forget the affecting compliment he paid us in calling the evening "a strengthener." Yours ever truly,

LEIGH HUNT.

Kensington, 23rd July [1845].

MY DEAR BELL,—(How naturally that sounds!) I am extremely obliged to you for your kind practical attention to the welfare of . . . .

Kindest remembrances to Holmes, whose book, I doubt not, will be delightful.* He has got as right a subject for a

* *The Life of Mozart.*—R. B.

nestling country lodging, as a bird's warble among the trees. I hope the book is to have a plentiful sprinkling of musical type,—visible and repeatable quotations from the poet Mozart. I beg his acceptance of some presumptuous (yet love-excusable) verses on the whole immortal tribe of composers from his old sincere friend, and yours (waiting your bird-call when you have got on with your books),

LEIGH HUNT.

Canning is an excellent, and, I should think, will be a very profitable subject. I rejoice to find you upon it.

Wimbledon, Surrey, 9th April [1846].

MY DEAR BELL,—See where I am, and conceive my vexation at receiving Lord Rossmore's letter *only last night*. It was delayed horribly at Kensington. You know what I think of him; and it would have given me the greatest pleasure to think I have contributed to his entertainment. I have written to say how disappointed I found myself, and how glad I should be if he would come and see me in a cottage I hope to find hereabouts, and take a chat over a barn-door fowl, provided I meet with one before he leaves England. I tell you all this, because I hope you will join him. We will have our wine, and our book, and our walk in a green lane, and so be at once proper and pastoral.

Verily I know of few things, short of positive evils, that have vexed me so much for a long time; but I feel sure that he would not have thought ill of my silence. He must have fancied me sick, or gone away, or something; and so must you.

You possibly know that I am writing in the *Atlas*, of all papers, and yet you not in it. My son Thornton has become editor, and I hebdomadize Table-Talk, under the catholic signature of one Adam Fitz-Adam, Esq. . . . . God bless you, dear Bell, wishes ever heartily yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

New Year's Day, 1847.*

(My first letter this year. Many happy returns to you.)

My dear Bell,—You must not take this as a specimen of the time at which proofs will be sent back in future. But I have been horribly "put out."

(Be kind enough to notice the request I have made, at the top of the proof, about "slips." I would ask for *two*, if it would not be indecent or inconvenient.)

The cause of my delay has been an excessive desire to be correct; and I have been waiting in vain for promised communications. My son Vincent, however, who brings this, will have brought such corrections with him as are finally necessary. I wished, if possible, to let the reader know the exact numbers of the houses in which Lord Byron and the Duke of Queensberry lived, because it adds to the interest of the pedestrian. I would have come to town about it myself, but my health would not let me.

I also had to make inquiries about Madame d'Arblay, lest my memory should have deceived me.

In future, I shall guard against these matters beforehand; but I have had many others to attend to.

I was quite ashamed of appearing so anxious about my first receipts; but on looking into my accounts at the close of the year, I find myself nearly 200*l.* in debt, which is a formidable thing to me, considering that all which I possess in the world is an annuity of 100*l.*; so I must set about liquidating it by the rigidest care, and seem to be a hunks, when God knows it is the farthest thing in the world from my heart.

Pray, when you write, give my kind love to Emerson

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* The "proofs" alluded to in the letter, dated New Year's Day, 1847, refer to a series of papers he had just commenced writing for the *Atlas*, under the title *Streets of London*. The letter affords very interesting evidence of the remarkable conscientiousness with which those pleasant chatty articles about London localities and celebrities were written. He had met Sir James Emerson Tennent at dinner with me a short time before Sir James went out to Ceylon, and had ever after a kindly recollection of him.—*Note by Mr. Robert Bell.*

Tennent, and tell him I wish I could whisk myself over seas, and pass some time with him in the island of "Serendib;"—for Ceylon will always be to me Sinbad's island, and, I hope, to him too; though I trust *he* will get rich enough without being frightened by serpents.

I rejoice in your approbation of the first article. My next, I trust, will be quite as amusing, or more so, though I have no such curious characters to paint in it. The whole subject is a mine of chat and anecdote, &c., if I can but live to try to do it justice. And spirits will not fail me, I believe, let me be tried as I may; but it is curious, meanwhile, to see how my very cough seems to grow better or worse, as I am more or less anxious.

There was, and is still, talk of a pension; but I cannot reckon upon it.—Ever, dear Bell, sincerely yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

Kensington, June 2nd [1847].

MY DEAR BELL,—Gratefullest thanks for what you have said of me and my book. I know the freshness of your own style, as well as I know the flowers of May. Your notice is as full of grace as kindness. I had hoped to send you these thanks on Monday with the week's article on the *Streets;* but, alas! am obliged this week fairly to give in, and write nothing. My night at Talfourd's, poor on my part as it seemed, cost me the usual penalties next day, and these were followed by a state of liver, &c., that has kept me half my time asleep ever since, and incapable when I am awake. Yet I am going out again on Tuesday next to Proctor's. Thus it is when old and dear friends see me at one place, they naturally think I can go to another; and how can I always continue to say nay? I feel an apology due to yourself and to Ainsworth on these occasions; but you must be kind enough to understand that Talfourd and Proctor are very *old* as well as dear friends, and that I have gone to no others, old or young. There seems a vanity in these excuses; they make one appear

as if one thought oneself of so much consequence to a friend; but you are not the man to refuse them their kindest construction.—Ever, my dear Bell, most sincerely yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

Even the writing of this and one lesser note has set pulses beating in my ears; and I cannot trespass on these sort of things as I have done, and continue writing in spite of them.

Kensington, 10th September [1847].

MY DEAR BELL,—Many thanks for your kind and animating letter, full of the freshness you speak of. I am certainly meditating new things, constantly thinking of them, while endeavouring to get better health; but repose is still so precious to me, that I have yet put little pen to paper. They must all, thank God!—that is to say, such as I feel a particular desire to write—be in the verse way, by stipulation with the bookseller, who will allow me to write nothing else till I have finished some work for *him*. My own views tend to a poem of some length (I have written a few short ones); but Forster has just put me upon shaping something dramatic, which I have begun, for the winter stage; and I think very earnestly of doing it. It is a mixed thing, in blank verse. I have a young French officer, of the old enjoying school, for the *smiles;* and a heroine who has been a little bit in the wrong, but not unpardonably so, for the *tears*. Do you know of the dinner at the Museum Club on Wednesday? * I hope you do; for I am not used to things of that sort, and want support

* The dinner alluded to was given to him by some of his friends at the Museum Club, on the 15th September, 1847. Mr. W. J. Fox was in the chair, and Douglas Jerrold and a crowd of literary men were present. Although, as he says, "not used to things of that sort," his speech, in acknowledgment of the affectionate enthusiasm with which his health was drunk, made a profound impression on his audience. It touched, with delicacy, some of the principal incidents of his literary career, and abounded in admirable passages bearing upon the literary character.—*Note by Mr. Robert Bell.*

for my enjoyment of their very honour and glory. I look, therefore, to your help, if you can give it me.

Herewith comes De Laune. The *Directory* is not mine, but the office's. The *Stow* you can leave out for me at ditto. Dear Bell, *sit* by me, if you can, on the above occasion; and believe me ever most heartily yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

Kensington, 2nd November [1848].

MY DEAR BELL,—Thanks for all your great kindness and trouble. Your letter found me at work on my play;* executing four suggestions with (to myself) great satisfaction; and I shall be ready to bring it you in the course of two or three days—say Monday, to make all sure. Will that suit you for Holmes, whom I shall rejoice to see? I will go to Webster, and also, with my play, to Phelps, at once, the moment you think it completed, if you think that would be the best way of communicating with him. At all events, it would save time; and time, alas!—— But I shan't do it any good by sad and loitering thoughts; so I dash them aside, and am most heartily yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

"Hatred" à la—— to Mrs. Bell, if you please.

Monday, 6 o'clock.

MY DEAR BELL,—You may guess the many reasons I have for mourning my inability to come to-night, and for sending to say so at so late an hour: I send the fly I was coming in with this letter. But I continue so very unwell (after having been so all the day, in consequence of an unlucky engagement which I had forgotten, and which I was forced to keep yesterday), that I believe I can only avoid a serious fit of illness by [not] venturing out these two days running, and to hospi-

* *The Secret Marriage.*—R. B.

table friends. I thought I should have been obliged, last night, to call up the house, which is a thing I have not done for many years. I now feel that a quiet evening at home, and a good night's rest, will restore me; and with great uneasiness at not coming to you, I feel myself bound even to yourselves (if you will let me make myself of so much importance to you) to act accordingly.

But now I have a favour to ask. [I have done the play, though I had no notion that you meant me to read it to you this evening, as your note seemed to intimate; nor do I think I should have been able to do so, had I come; at least, not with impunity. Be good enough, therefore, to let me know by the bearer whether I may send it you to-morrow (it is all fresh copied out), or whether you would still have me bring it you, either to read (myself) the parts you recommended altering, or for you to read them, as you thought fit.] But, at all events, I have a favour to ask, which you must grant me because I am at this sad disadvantage; and it is this—that you will give me another evening's invitation as quickly as possible, to meet Holmes, to whom I beg my cordialist remembrances. I must have it very soon, for my interest's sake, if I am to bring the play, for I have no time to lose with ditto as to play-house; and I must beg it equally soon for the sake of my feelings, which are truly wounded at disconcerting the arrangements of my kind friends this evening in Bedford Street.

Supper, I *fear*; though I should have encountered it to-night. But if you and Mrs. Bell have the courage to give Holmes and me a chop and one pudding (*literally*) by way of *dinner*, as early as you please, you would do the thing of all others that would most delight and convenience me. I acknowledge all the merits you claim for the *petit souper*; but it is a vivacity beyond the present *next-day's* powers of yours most sincerely,

LEIGH HUNT.

I would come *to-morrow*, or *next day*, or *next day*.

Kensington, 28th November [1848].

My dear Bell,—I should be ashamed at not having communicated with you before this, had I not been in one of my greatest worlds of trouble. When I am out of them, I will tell you all particulars about the play, with grateful thanks. Suffice, meantime, that I adopted almost all your hints, restored the fifth act to its pristine fury, and am now expecting Phelps's verdict every day. He had it last Wednesday. With kindest respects to Mrs. Bell, every yours truly,

Leigh Hunt.

Kensington, 27th November, 1849.

My dear Bell,—My hope of dining in Soho Square, as you may remember, is as old as your removal thither; but the power of realizing it is, unfortunately, quite denied me. I am far too unwell to be away from home at all, except for a little while in the middle of the day. But any information which you would give me on theatrical affairs, either by a note or by coming and taking tea with me at your own hour (which would be a charity), might be of special service to me at this moment; for Greenwood, with a view to the immediate settlement of something or other at Sadler's Wells, has asked me what I should expect per night, in case of the bringing out of the *Secret Marriage;* and, by way of sop, perhaps, for additional delays (for he speaks of two new pieces which he is first compelled to produce "against his will"), he has requested me, also, to name my demand for the immediate performance, to some fortnight's extent, of the *Legend of Florence*. If F. could come with you, I need not say how glad I should be; and it would be a real Christian deed, on both sides, to an imprisoned and almost unvisited patient (for Kensington, I find, is in the wilds of Yorkshire, and, accordingly, I can only expect such journies from enthusiastic benevolence—from the Howards and Oglethorpes of visitation).—Ever truly yours,

Leigh Hunt.

P.S.—I would give you some good tea and seasonable toast, and no supper at all; so that you need fear no bad wine or late hours, but get away early.

To Thornton Hunt.

Kensington, 1st April.

My dear Thornton,—Mr. ——— is here, and naturally wishes, like myself, to interest you in the recollection of Dr. Southwood Smith's services regarding the health of towns, with a view to an appointment on the projected Central Board of Authority. You know he has been twice a Government commissioner; has hardly received (so to speak) a guinea for his services; and has lost or given up so much private practice for his public, as to render his friends anxious on the occasion. As you will probably say something on Lord Morpeth's project, you may not be sorry to be informed that Dr. Smith was the first to advocate a sanitary measure in his treatise on fever, published sixteen years ago. In 1837, appeared his reports on Whitechapel and Bethnal-green, made for the Poor Law Commissioners, on the motion of Mr. Chadwick; and, in 1838, his report of the prevalence of fever in twenty Metropolitan unions. In 1842, appeared his evidence before the Health of Towns Committee. These services were acknowledged by Lord Normanby, on his bringing forward the Drainage of Buildings Bill, in 1841. Next appeared the Doctor's evidence before the Commissioners of Inquiry appointed by Sir Robert Peel, which led to Lord Lincoln's bill; and, finally, he organized the Health of Towns Association, the Report of which (issued by the committee) is well known to have come from his pen. In short, he has been incessantly writing, acting, losing money, and doing good.

His three Government employments were on the Factory, Children's Employment, and Metropolitan Sanitary Commissions.

I say no more, except to congratulate you on the power

you have of doing so much good yourself every week. I differ with you sometimes about persons; but in things you always interest, and often instruct, your affectionate father,

LEIGH HUNT.

To R. H. HORNE.

Kensington, 17th October, 1848.

MY DEAR HORNE,—You will find what you want in the following books,—perhaps in half or a quarter of them,—certainly in the course of them. Those that are marked with a cross I *have*, and will send them you by the carrier, if you like:—

Life of Garrick, by Murphy (the dramatist).

Life of Garrick, by Davies, the actor (and bookseller).

Baker's *Biographica Dramatica.*

†Life in Chalmers's *General Biography.*

The Garrick Correspondence. (Letters between him and all his friends and admirers; in 2 thick vols. quarto.)

†Churchill's *Rosciad.*

†Lloyd's *Actor* (in his poems).

Cumberland's *Autobiography.*

Article by ditto, in *London Review*, containing *Recollections of the Stage.*

Galt's *Lives of the Players.*

Johnson's *Lives of the Poets* (I forget what poet, nor have I the work; but I think it is at the *beginning* of one of the Lives).

†Boswell—*many* little notices.

Incidental notices in †Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* and *Letters.*

In Smollett's *History of England.*

Fielding's *Tom Jones.*

†Goldsmith's *Retaliation.*

To the best of my recollection, Cumberland's notices are the best written and most graphic, Murphy's probably the

most systematic, Davies's the most minute and example-giving. But I doubt whether there is any thoroughly complete and masterly criticism.

Your last scene of *Judas* is very fine, particularly his soliloquy at pp. 37, 38, Lazarus's at p. 41, and the sound of the hammers. I think the miscellaneous poems also your very best of the kind, particularly the first half of the *Urn*, *Genius*, the golden picture of the negro, the *Kite*, and the *Thane of Caivdor*. I do not quite like the last part of the *Michael Angelo*. I find a meaning, but am not sure it is the right one. The poems which I have named I read again and again. They are right fine poetry and music,—all pertinent, and tending to a centre, not diverging from it,—not fine thoughts made to fit, but thoughts and feelings growing out of the heart of the matters. I shall tell Forster so, and all my other critical friends, besides saying it myself in a book which I am writing.

Mrs. Hunt begs kindest remembrances to you and yours; and so, dear Horne, does your ever affectionate

LEIGH HUNT.

To EDMUND PEEL.

Kensington, 18th February, 1849.

MY DEAR PEEL,—Who would have thought that I could receive a letter from you, and not be glad to see it! Yet by one of those extraordinary chances, or coincidences, or retributions, or whatsoever else they are to be called, which sometimes, nay, I suspect, very often happen in this world, and which are sure (as the man said) to happen to *me*, I was going upstairs this morning to get out of a drawer in my bedroom the fragment of a letter addressed to yourself, and dated (I am ashamed to say) the first of December, when the one you wrote yesterday was put into my hand. You will conclude, of course, that I was going to finish it (which I was, with all due apologies), and to complete my misery, I had

been congratulating myself, not an hour before, that at all events you had not written again; so that, thought I, hugging myself on this little crumb of comfort left at the bottom of the Pandora's box of delay,—I shall not be deprived of whatever poor little particle of grace belongs to a voluntary however late movement. *Postman's knock. Enter letter from Bonchurch. The miscreable.* By heavens, he *has* written again! And then how good the letter was! How delicate in saying nothing of the former one, or of my silence! How Christian! and what a hat-full of "coals of fire" I suddenly felt upon my head! Certainly there is no revenge like the Christian: I begin to think it is a very vindictive religion, and that one has no right to be so ferociously considerate, so barbarously and overwhelmingly forgiving. And then too, I suppose you will turn round, and say that you didn't "know you had anything to forgive;" which is sinking in the "lowest depths" of revenge, a "lower deep," where the poor forgiven wretch writhes under the last agonizing refinements of exoneration. Pardon *can't* reach him further. Well, my dear Peel, joco-seriousness apart (for I am very serious in my request) I have been truly obliged by both your letters; and I beg you to be assured (for the kinder you are, the more anxious I feel to excuse myself) that I really *have* the excuses, as far as they go, of a series of the most anxious and painful *contretemps*, otherwise I should sooner have acknowledged the rare and unexpected pleasure of the receipt of your first letter; "rare" I call it, because it is seldom my good fortune to meet with a man whose mind lives in such a sincere and sequestered region as yours (almost all my friends of that sort having long quitted this world); and "unexpected," because I certainly did not look to your saying anything about *Imagination and Fancy*, till I had the gratification of another personal chat with you about the poets we love. Your letter found me in the agonies of working against time, to meet an unexpected wish of my bookseller; I then, after writing a couple of pages of an answer to it, had to wait a little for the receipt of your poems from F.; my delay then

helped to make more delay; it had meanwhile become necessary for me to endeavour to get up a play, which I had been concocting; and to crown all, I fell ill of the influenza in all its regular and severest forms, and am at this moment suffering under its consequences. But enough. I will never delay with you again. I rejoice that you were so pleased with my book, and particularly that you read me out-loud sometimes to other good-natured ears. Our accordance of opinion also about the nightingale was very gratifying. I will show you, when we meet, something more on that subject, as it interests you. As to Milton, I have probably a tendency in me, notwithstanding all my admiration of him, not to do him entire justice, owing to the derogatory notions which he appears to me to entertain of the Deity,—or at least which his poem entertains, for you know he lived to rectify his religious opinions. But he is a great and wonderful poet; and in other respects I reverence him afar off, and "his skirts adore." And now let me say that if I did not write to you as soon as I ought to have done, I did not lose the pleasure of reading *The Return*, as you will see by the passages marked in it. My pleasure was not the less on account of the locality, and I should have liked to know the exact spot, especially as I hope to visit the place this summer. There are very sweet things in the poem, and descriptions evidently painted from nature; but I think they would both do themselves more justice, were the style less diffuse. You have too great a reverence for other poets, and even (in an imitative point of view) for Scripture itself; I mean, you suffer their language to run too much into your own, even so far as to make numerous actual quotations, to which kind of thing on such occasions I object in toto; my object, when I hear a poet singing, being to hear *him* sing, and not another man. I think that if your longer poems (not some of your beautiful sonnets) were reduced to half their size, they would be doubled in their effect; the case probably with all my own of the like size, and perhaps with nine-tenths of all the poems, even the very best, that are written. Heaven help us all,

and grant that everybody may read what I write, with as much pleasure as I read you.

Poor White! I know too well, as you do, what he must feel. The very sweetness of the tears for such losses contribute, at the moment, an extreme of bitterness; but they run into soothing waters at last. I rejoice that you like my *Jar*, and especially my beloved subject *King Robert*. I am glad you speak of *Wit and Humour*, because it reminds me that I intended to send you a copy soon after that of its companion,—one book belonging, as it were, to the other; so you will receive one in a few days from the bookseller, of which I beg your good-natured acceptance. And so God bless you for the present prays heartily, my dear Peel, your obliged and sincere friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

P. S.—I dare not think of the pleasure of coming to the Isle of Wight. I fear it is a forbidden one to a person of my state of health and long and almost morbid domestic habits.

To WILLIAM ALLINGHAM.

Edwardes Square, Kensington,
16th October, 1850.

MY DEAR SIR,—Why did you not come in? You would have found a hearty, though an humble welcome. You were right about the green rails. Our landlord has gifted my neighbour and myself with a green, I fear, of a somewhat violent colour, not in the best taste. However, liking the colour in the abstract, we make the best of it in this its concrete, and persuade ourselves that we look very rustical and remote. Our square, with its pretty houses and large enclosure, its ivy-covered backs of houses on one side, and gardens and backs of houses on another, was a curiosity which, when I first saw it, I could not account for on *English* principles, uniting, as it did, something decent, pleasant, and cheap, with such anti-*comme il faut* anomalies—such aristocratical size and verdure in the ground-plot, with so plebeian a smallness

in the tenements. But it seems a *Frenchman* invented it. London, as you say, is not a poetical place to look at; but surely it is poetical in the very amount and comprehensiveness of its enormous experience of pain and pleasure—a Shaksperian one. It is one of the great giant representatives of mankind, with a huge beating heart; and much of the vice, even, and misery of it (in a deep philosophical consideration), is but one of the forms of the movement of a yet unsteadied progression, trying to balance things, and not without its reliefs; though, God knows, there is enough suffering to make us all keep a look out in advance. I like your *Anacreon's Grave* much. It is full of impulse and enjoyment. The others do not appear to me so happy. The rhymes are too forced in *Melodoric Iceland;* and *any* rhyme, I think, hurts the pathetic simplicity of Simonides. You see you get all sincerity from me, if you do not get all applause; but I am much mistaken in you, if this candour is altogether distasteful to your manly palate.—I am, dear sir, most sincerely yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

Kensington, 22nd November, 1850.

MY DEAR WILLIAM ALLINGHAM,—(For I think we know and regard one another by this time sufficiently to drop the "Sir;" and by-and-by, I hope, we will drop all addressing whatsoever inside our letters, like two friends talking who are sure of one another's affection—an admirable ancient custom still observed in some countries, and which I have long wished to see introduced into this. Suppose we begin directly; that is to say, after you have given me one "dear Leigh Hunt" to encourage me.)

Your "delight" in the new announcement (*Leigh Hunt's Journal*) was delightfully welcome. It gave me no little additional hope, and I trust we shall all do something with our new channel of power. I should have thanked you immediately both for your congratulations and your poem, which of course is also welcome, but I wanted to say what I could not

say till now; nor, indeed, can I say even that as precisely as I wish till I have had another talk with my fellows in the *Journal*. This much, however, forthwith, that you must be paid for your verses, and will (that is a sine-qua-non), and that I want you very much to try your hand at some prose tales—also, of course, to be paid for. Poetry includes prose; and you have only to lay the higher and more emotional part of your music aside on such questions, and be more *ob* than *sub*jective. Do you feel inclined to this? and do you think you could send me a specimen before the month is out—a short one, complete in itself, so as to be insertable all at once? Say a page, or two pages, or three? Afterwards you could write tales less short, "to be continued." We are about the size of *Household Words*, and I could ensure you (however inadequate to my wishes) a guinea a page to begin with. By-and-by you should prosper better with our prosperity. Poetry, when good (and we mean to have no other, whatever its degree), ought to be paid more; but it is a puzzle to know what to do with it in that matter at first, on account of quantity; for if a good sonnet is precious, what ought not a good ode to be, and yet how can our funds do them equal justice? I am afraid we must positively pay less, comparatively speaking, in proportion to the length; which is as if we were to give less for a statue than a bust. I suppose we must make a compromise with the old shabbiness, and though we pay the poet in part, let him take out the rest in glory. The best way will be, I think, to encourage short rather than long poems; so if you have a mind to exercise the poet's customary generosity, and encourage us that way, send us, pray, a few sonnets or other poem*etts*. Not but what your *Nightcap* will receive due insertion. You will find a notice of your volume in our first number; but that need not delay anything you may write for us, as we openly prefer the sincerest dealing in critical matters, and I shall take the opportunity of valuing myself (openly) on your dedication. So pray try the tale for me if you can, and believe me, ever affectionately yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

P.S. Carlyle is hearty for us, and will glorify our first number with a contribution; and I do not despair of one from Tennyson. I am better. Tell me that you are so.—We prefer stories founded on facts, if to be had.

To Mrs. Procter.

Kensington, 1st July.

My dear Mrs. Procter,—For the first time these five months I am going out this evening, by invitation, to meet Mr. Emerson at the most tremendous of bookseller's, in the Strand. (He is bookseller, writer, philosopher, succeeder, young, stout, good-looking, and scientific, all in one; so that authors will have no chance with him. He will ruin them, of course, as a bookseller; and then convince them that they ought to be content with being ruined, as a logician.)

Now one evening out of doors makes this right side of mine tremble; judge, then, what must be the case in the contemplation of two. Nevertheless, I am so desirous of seeing my old friends again, and as much as possible of any new, that if I am not thoroughly knocked up, I will certainly come to Harley Street; and, at all events, will try very hard.—Ever truly yours,

Leigh Hunt.

Kensington, 28th December.

My dear Mrs. Procter,—Nothing shall prevent my having the pleasure of being in Harley Street to-morrow, unless certain symptoms of illness which have been growing upon me for some days past should become much aggravated. If they do, you must consider me as grieving and coughing by my fireside. But I will hope the best. If I come I shall bring the book with me, of the advent of which your husband, I trust, has spoken. If not, that ubiquitous individual, Parcel Delivery, shall present it to you for your acceptance next day. I greatly desire to join your party; and I have a great notion, on all sickly occasions, of the desirableness of cultivating the

vitality of the soul within us, as a guest who can do wonderful things towards keeping together the premises he sojourns in; so I shall come by all means if I can. I hope by that time your arm will have recovered. I have had a sad spectacle here for nearly a dozen weeks, in poor Mrs. Hunt, confined to her bed with *two* swollen incapable arms, and general pains to correspond, but she is convalescing.—Ever truly yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

To ALEXANDER IRELAND.

Kensington, 31st May.

MY DEAR IRELAND,—My friend, Mr. Ollier, informs me that "some weeks ago" there was a very kind notice of me in an article on your old godfather, the *Examiner*. I fear the godson must have thought me very insensible for saying nothing about it; but I have never seen the article. The number of the *Manchester Examiner* containing it never came into my hands. Observing the series of notices which your paper was giving of contemporary journals, &c., I had delayed making a remark or two on itself till I had seen the number in question; and its non-arrival was, therefore, doubly perplexing. Will you have the goodness to inquire whether any accident may have stopped it at the office? When I receive it, I will write again. I have another request to make you; which is, to constitute yourself, for one minute, my spiritual representative at the Amateur supper (luckily for you, you *cannot* represent me in the flesh), and getting up, glass in hand, drink my kindest affectionate remembrances to my famous friends, and cordialest wishes for the Shakspearian welfare of Knowles.—Ever most sincerely yours,

(Signed) LEIGH HUNT.

P.S.—You will be glad to hear that Webster has accepted my play, and that he promises to bring it but early next season.

Kensington, 2nd June. [1848.]

MY DEAR IRELAND,—I have just received a glorious batch of *Examiners*, containing several numbers which I had not seen, and among others the one for which—how shall I thank it? This is indeed "casting one's bread on the waters, and finding it after many days." It gave me a pleasure so exquisite, as almost to amount to pain. I felt as if I had not done enough; and can only say, I am prepared to do more, if required,—if not in quantity or quality, yet in addition, and as long as I live. It found me in act, though a Queen's pensioner, and one of her lovers, of writing a dithyrambic in praise of the new French revolution; a poem, which will head the new little volume in preparation, and which I hope, will be no very elderly specimen of my old animal spirits. A writer, I see, in one of your extracts from the reviews, speaks of a certain "constitutional timidity," which made me qualify what I said at Lamb's parties, in a "parenthesis." I have always had timidity enough in some respects, however fearless in others; and another man certainly may know us better than we do ourselves (this may perhaps be a specimen of said parenthesis); but I certainly supposed what he speaks of to have been owing to the growth of my understanding; and a wish to see fair play to all points of a subject; and this I can surely affirm, that no timidity of any sort ever hindered me from expressing an opinion, publicly or privately. Again and again I thank the *Examiner* and all parties concerned, the writer in particular; and now let me add what I could not so well say till you had had your say about myself,—that my Manchester namesake does more than abundant honour to its godfather in every way. It is one of the very best newspapers in England; is indeed a newspaper truly so called and yet a magazine to boot (as our family enjoyment of it here weekly testifies); and the big *Times* must have felt that there was a very stalwart fellow looking in its face, when those admirable articles upon it were begun. With the Companion I need not tell you how I shook hands; and so I hope to do with "Sir Oracle," who was new to me. How I envy your

supper-table to-night! But I shall be with you perhaps more than you suspect, even when you have done representing me; for my dithyrambic runs so in my head; it keeps me awake in bed, and I lie hailing all good fellows and friends, both in France and England. Again and a thousand times thanks to the *Manchester Examiner*.—Even most truly yours,

(Signed) LEIGH HUNT.

P.S.—Please tell F. that I received yesterday his notice of my letters, and was very glad of it. Tell him also of my dithyrambic, which I only began the night before, after commencing several other poems on the subject, in which I found I had not got into the right track. Indeed, I hope you will show both him and Dickens, and any other such friend as you think will be tender to the egotistical part of it, the whole of this letter.

Kensington, 11th October.

MY DEAR SIR,—You will have seen by this time how much I was interested in the *Autobiography of a Working Man*. I thought to mark none but certain of the most prominent passages; but found myself scoring half what I read. I cannot but think that the collected articles would make a very taking book.* The poor would like it from similarity of condition; the rich for the reverse reason; and all classes for its sincerity, graphic power, raciness of style, and a certain universality of sympathy. I have taken the freedom of an elder and more educated pen to mark an occasional incorrectness,—sometimes probably what was not really such, but only an allowable form of idiomatical or provincial expression; and it is for the author and his publishers to consider how far any (if any) observations are worth alluding to. In one

* The *Autobiography of a Working Man* was then appearing in the columns of the *Manchester Examiner*; Mr. Ireland, the editor, having instigated Alexander Somerville to write his life, as he did. Several of the chapters which had already appeared the editor sent up to his friend in London.

passage only, do I remember differing with his conclusions. It is where he speaks,—a little ultra-prudentially perhaps,—I should rather say a little irreligiously, and not worthily of him,—of what he is pleased to call "absurdities" in love; viz.: love itself, and the innocent, delightful, and ever to be missed and honoured "illusions" (as people call them) of its exalting imagination; as if a thousand subsequent grave notions were anything better, or rather half so good. He will excuse my sincerity in this matter for the sake of his own. Wishing him and yourself all success and happiness,—I am ever, dear Sir, most heartily yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

To MISS PLANCHÉ.

Kensington, 14th January.

MATTIE MIA,—I was very glad indeed to hear from you, and to think that my letter gave the least particle of comfort during a period of suffering so great.

God bless us all, and all kindly memories. Everything will come right everywhere, some time or other; so now, having done our best and suffered our worst, let us see how cheerfully we can do the duties that remain.

I shall read your books with the greatest pleasure, and tell you what I think of them with the greatest truth; for you have stuff enough in you, I suspect, to afford it, and can benefit from what an old author has to say to a young one. But I cannot do this for these two or three weeks, because I am so beset with work. I am concluding two new publications for two booksellers, and writing weekly articles besides. Take this frankness as a compliment, and as a specimen of that with which I shall treat you.

Tell your father I am delighted to see, by the newspapers, his constant success, though it is the oldest news in the world. As to going anywhere at present, I have not been out of the house for many weeks, the return here from Wimbledon did me so much injury. But I am mending again, and Michael's

Grove Lodge is always one of the places I wish to come to in fine weather. Meantime, if I cannot come as soon as I wish, let fine weather bring Jattie, Hattie, and Mattie to see their ever faithful friend,

L. H——ATTIE.

To Mr. William Moxon.

Kensington, July 4, Half-past Eleven.

Dear Sir,—I have but this instant, through an inadvertence of the person who received it, while I was from home, got your circular about the funeral!* Otherwise I should have noticed it sooner. Mr. F., however, had invited me to attend it with him; but unfortunately, though I extremely wished to do so, my state of health prevented. I *hope* (saving the malice of the expression) that the majority of my brother rhymesters had as true and as unwilling an excuse; for there was a sad strange dearth of them, I see by the newspapers.—I am, dear sir, truly yours,

L. Hunt.

From Horace Twiss.

4, *Inner Temple Lane,*
Sunday, 8th February, 1848.

Sir,—I have just learned that some of your friends have expressed a suspicion of *my* being concerned in the invention or publication of the calumnies with which you have been assailed in a periodical work: and though I have not the pleasure of your personal acquaintance, and though, on subjects of taste and of politics, I may sometimes have expressed myself in print with greater acrimony than I should now think it right to introduce into any literary contest, especially against an adversary whose talents it is impossible

* In reference to the funeral of Thomas Campbell.

not to value, yet I can truly say that at no time of my life would it have been possible for me to commit a deliberate outrage upon private character. I beg you therefore to accept the assurance which I give you solemnly and upon my honour, that I am totally unconnected with this flagrant libel: that I never was guilty of *affecting* such a belief.—I am, sir, with much esteem, your obedient servant,

HORACE TWISS.

To JACINTHA.

16th July.

DEAREST JACEY MINE,—I have but *this instant* got your letter dated *Monday*, and am afflicted at your having been so anxious about us; of which I had no conception. We had news of you both from yourself and Mrs. Nepean — good news; and I should have written again and again, had I not thought you received the answers you speak of. We are all as we are accustomed to be; your mother at work or reading, myself writing or reading. Sunday last my parlour was illustrious with the visits of poets—Proctor, Browning, and Mrs. Browning; and to-day I hope to spend an hour or so with Macaulay at Kensington, where he has come for the benefit of his chest. Otherwise, I too have been much ailing and in-doors, but am now getting better. I hoped to have visited him three weeks ago, when I first learnt of his being in the neighbourhood, but I could not manage it. To *you*, nevertheless, I would have come had you called me, whatsoever the impediments might have been; and I would come always in the like case, however unable to go anywhere else. Let your bedside always be sure of that. Your mother tells me she wrote yesterday and has explained all. Rejoicing at your coming soon to us, and blessing Mr. S. for enabling you to get well enough to do so, I am ever, my darling, your loving father,

LEIGH HUNT.

Kensington, 21st September [1850].

My dear Jacintha,—You are my right, own, proper Hyacinth in thus doing what is asked of you, and giving me such a full and particular account of the way in which you pass your time. It is a very capital way, and just what you ought to do in order to get up your health, and be and make others happy; only I hope you do not (or when you read this letter will not) forget to read "one page in some good-book;" especially as by "good" you know I don't mean anything formal, or bigoted, or otherwise *bad*, but pleasant also, and happy-making, or comforting, as all true goodness is. I now know what you are doing at all seasons of the day, and so am with you very often, doing just the same things, eating your blackberries (though I never touch them), and enjoying Mrs. Philpott's guitar and Emma's piano (though I am never so fortunate as to hear them). Item, I play at ball (without any chance of lumbago), and "eat enough for two people," in your person, besides taking a hearty dinner in my own. Your mother says it was a mistake about Vincent's coming again so soon. She was speaking of *my* coming; but this is out of the question at present. I have just had an invitation from my old friend Henry Robertson to go and visit him at Chertsey, but I cannot yet do it; not on account of illness, but owing to a "hundred things," as people say; the chief of which is fear lest your mother should be ill in my absence. Tell baby to reflect on the philosophy of teething (for this is what we expect of her brain), and so behave like a proper, considerate infant; otherwise we shall look upon her as no better than her neighbours, and one that won't at all listen to reason, which would be odd and provoking. Nevertheless, I give her a kiss, and wish her "well rid of her gums," as the Irishman said. Ollier shall have your message, which I really believe will help to push him forward with his book, if anything will. Love to all from all, and a thousand blessings from your affectionate father,

L. H.

To Vincent Leigh Hunt.

Kensington, 11*th July* [1850].

My dearest Vincent,—What you say about short letters comes very *à propos* this morning, for I have had several to write, and I always want to write you such a long one that, without your kind intimation to the reverse, I should have fidgeted myself for being so brief in answer to an epistle so full as yours, and so particularly delightful at this moment, for I had got into one of my unfounded worries about your cold in (thankless) spite of the good-natured pains which Mrs. Philpott took to make me think nothing of it. She was, nevertheless, so kind as to write me a letter after she left us, on purpose to set my mind at ease, and with her letter came yours; so you may imagine how easy I am, and how happy to see such evidences of comfort and kindness on all sides. Her sketches of the house are quite artistical. I shall keep them before me till you return, and then hang them somewhere. I have written her a letter in return such as I hope will please you. Your account of the man "on village" is very witty, and made us laugh and laugh again. . . . —Your very loving father,

L. H.

Kensington, 20*th July* [1850].

Vincenzino mio,—Your mother could not help letting me see the contents of your letter, for I had seen the letter itself (externally) before she opened it; and why should they not have been communicated to me. You do not do yourself justice in such matters, and *therefore* not me either, for are you not one of the least money-loving and money-spending of all possible sons? I inclose half-a-sovereign to cover all chances, for such chances will sometimes inevitably rise, and then how pained I should be to think you underwent them without remedy!

I was going to see your uncle this afternoon and tell him how matters stood, when luckily a note arrives this very

morning from Colonel Phipps, by which all turns out to be right; so I shall go with nothing but pleasure. Think of all this. • What comfort! and pray smoke your cigars, and pay your way like a hero; if so poor a sum, alas! as half-a-sovereign will enable you to do it.—Your Padre Padrissimo,

L. H.

Kensington, 1st August [1850].

MY DEAREST VINCENT,— . . . . I have thought of little but Cardinomia since I saw you; so much, indeed, that for that very reason the *finale* proceeds slowly—I think so intensely of every *note* while revising it. Paton has most excellently drawn symbol and capital letter with it; but I had forgotten to ask him to draw only a symbolical, not a real heart; and he has done the latter, and so I must take him at his generous word, and get him to draw again.—Ever your most loving father,

L. H.

Kensington, 14th July [1851].

MY DEAREST VINCENT,—I have this instant, with a grateful heart, received your letter of Saturday; so I make an ostentatious show of my promptitude in response. The sonnet is very good in the spirit of it,—good and true (sick notions, of course, apart) in every sense of the word; but the letter does not do every part of it justice.

In the first place, the seventh line has a syllable too much in the word "fragrance;" but this is so easily changed for "sweets," that with all your conscientiousness on such points I think you may readily accept the substitute, it is such an obvious one.

Secondly, the eighth line has also a syllable too much in the word *a;* and you must otherwise alter this line, because you will perceive that you have repeated a rhyme (and a word) in it, in the word "again."

The rest is correct, only I don't quite like "doth prove;" —two words, both of which, separately as well as together, have a filling-up sound—though "prove" is really proper in the present instance. Do you think you can alter it without too much trouble? If you can, do so, as well as the eighth line; but don't, on any account, worry yourself. Any worry, in addition to the inevitable worry of sickness, is bad for a convalescent; and you are specially bound to have none in connexion with *me*, to whom it is impossible for you to give a worrying thought, except inasmuch as you yourself might be worried. Think of this; and dismiss all such takings-up of your time from your mind, whatever they may be, from a *What's that? massacre à la Campbell*, if ever you committed one (which I mention as the most tremendous thing I can think of), down to the alteration of a sonnet. Take no trouble, in short, which does not just amount to a pleasure. We are all going on well, and everybody sends love, especially your mother. Kindest greetings to your friends from your most affectionate father,

LEIGH HUNT.

* *

A night or two after you left, they ceased to tie up the poor dog next door, and accordingly we enjoyed a delightful silence, and we slept in peace. They have now recommenced tying him up, and his serenades have returned. The moment he sees the cord he begins remonstrating; and the moment it is off, he frisks about in a rapture of freedom. He is not of a breed fit to be a watch-dog; and if they continue to ill-use him, I shall remonstrate and abate the nuisance, in all courtesy. This is the greatest event of our lives at present, except the sight of the horticultural E. and the lovely Mrs. C., &c.

I need not tell you how I prize, in the sonnet, the mention of myself.

I should be glad of a line to-morrow to know whether you expect me by omnibus on Wednesday, or whether you would prefer my coming any other day.

Kensington, 25*th July* [1851].

. . . . While writing this letter, the oddest vision came across me that you can imagine. The door of the room gently opened, and an unknown child made his appearance, all in bright yellow, and sucking an (origin) orange. (Look at the ludicrous mistake I had made in writing.) This juvenile saffron "ghost at noon-day," advanced slowly towards me, *always* sucking the orange, and staring over it with two black eyes, till it came close to my chair. I had not the slightest conception who it was, and gave it to understand as much, when it answered, still sucking the orange, "Johnny Dodds." His mother had brought him to see us. I went to seek Julia in self-defence, and nearly convulsed her with laughter by acting him. Your most loving father,

LEIGH HUNT.

Leigh Hunt left Edwardes Square early in 1851, and went to live at No. 2, Phillimore Terrace, still in Kensington. His residence there, however, was not of long duration; and some months of the time were passed away from home at Ewell, whither he went with his youngest son Vincent, then suffering from the consumption of which he died in October, 1852. From the letters of this period may be gathered the more than fatherly affection which he bore for Vincent, who had through life, and particularly in these later years, been a most faithful friend and companion,—the most devoted of all Leigh Hunt's sons.

The labours of this period were necessarily not so productive as that which had gone before. The *Table Talk* was published in 1851. Another book had found its earliest germ in the third volume, entitled, *Christianism*, published years before. The new work was entitled the *Religion of the Heart*, and was published in 1853. It brought to the author a great number of letters from friends and admirers of every conceivable class. The letters of this period I arrange partly in order of their dates, but partly also in reference to the mournful event by which it was principally marked.

FROM CHARLES OLLIER.

June 18th, 1851.

MY DEAR HUNT,— . . . . I shall not fail to make my dear friend, James, happy by communicating what you say of him. It is wonderful to see how cordially men of different parties and opinions come together by the mere ripening of Nature, and progress of Time. James was an uncompromising Tory—an honest one assuredly; for God never created a nobler or honester heart than his. Like you and Abou Ben Adhem, he deserves, by loving his fellow-men,

to stand at the head of "those whom love of God had bless'd." For some years before he had the gratification (and I *know* it was a high one) of seeing you, he was in the habit of speaking with unbounded admiration of your writings, and with a thorough and declared recognition of your incorruptible principles. In many things, James and you resemble each other, particularly in a lofty disdain of subterfuge and sophistry, and a determined assertion, without reference to consequences, of what you each believe to be truth. Though, in his youth, captivated with military "glory," he now denounces it, as you will see in his forthcoming romance (*The Fate*) as vehemently as you have done in *Captain Sword and Captain Pen*. He will listen to nothing whatever that can be urged in extenuation of it, but brands War as a sanguinary offence against the Creator.

My wife and Clara desire me to send their kindest remembrances to Mrs. Hunt and Julia; both of whom, God willing, they expect to be with on Friday evening.—Ever affectionately yours, my dear Hunt, CHARLES OLLIER.

To CHARLES OLLIER.

Kensington, 19th June, 1851.

MY DEAR OLLIER,—Thanks for your thanks, and for the certainty of coming pleasure. The Beethoven is excellent, super-excellent. But is there no Gluck also? no Mozart, &c., no symphony in E flat, or in D? Recollect that I have not heard these things for years,—some of them for many years; and prevail upon yourselves to be generous accordingly. Julia will sing her two or three little songs with pleasure, the more so for Clara's accompaniment; but we hunger and thirst for the rare delight of a good evening's instrumentation. And won't you bring your flute? Pray bring your flute. I wish we had also the "fine prose style" of a certain person's violin.

Glory be to God in heaven that James is going to preach the gospel "according to" his *namesake*.—Your ever affectionate friend, LEIGH HUNT.

Kensington, 29*th April*, 1852.

My dear Ollier,—Thanks for your most kind and welcome letter. Vincent, thank God! is so much better with the good weather, that he has eaten to-day a heartier dinner than for months past, not omitting even a glass of port (both, videlicet the port and the lamb) being the gift of Lord Leigh, who comforts and delights me with his hereditary regard. They came suddenly upon us like the good showers, together with, or followed rather by, a letter which I shall have great pleasure in showing you. Like Vincent, I am a water-drinker in general; but I could not resist Bacchus in the shape of old affections, so I, too, have been drinking my glass of port, and consigning cares to the late east winds.

I don't know whether I ever told you that the same difficulty which stood so painfully in the way of my coming to you at Brighton hindered me from ever seeing the Great Exhibition. I never crossed its threshold. I longed extremely to go; and my only comfort was that my friends would see what a compulsory homester I was. A long and skilful course of medical treatment has really, I think, made a difference in me; and by the time you return, I trust to be able to come and see you. Meantime, God bless you! my dear Ollier, and give you and yours a journey equal in pleasure to your powers of discerning the beauties of His creation. Love to all from Vincent, and Mrs. Hunt and your ever affectionate friend,

Leigh Hunt.

Kensington, 26*th May*, 1852.

My dear Ollier,—I should have answered you by return of post; but your letter found me occupied with *another* letter which ran to a length so unexpected, that the time was lost before I was aware. Pray, make my best acknowledgments to Captain Mackinnon. I should have been most happy to avail myself of his kind offer, and can fancy few things better than rolling about new scenes in the country with such a companion as you have described him; but Vincent, I know,

would miss me too much, though he wouldn't say so; and the more he wouldn't say so, the more you know I couldn't come. Captain Mackinnon will understand this as well as yourself. I have just drunk his (the Captain's) health, in a glass of Lord Leigh's wine, which I oughtn't to take; so he will see how I am inclined to go along with him, right or wrong. Not that I mean to say he takes wine when he oughtn't, but I wished to show that, like himself, I can push a right sentiment to a pitch of audacity.

I didn't, my dear Ollier, wish you to look for furnished cottages only, but unfurnished; for we might put up our tents in the new place for a year, and then our own furniture would *tell*. Ergo, you must enlarge your memorandums a little, and I know you will do so with all your heart. The only dislike I have to quitting Kensington, or rather the greatest dislike, next to one or two other old and one new affections (I allude to Piccadilly), is that of quitting your neighbourhood; but I can never help fancying that we shall still, somehow or other, come together; and I trust we shall do so, and so remain, till we *again* part for *good*, and AGAIN, in that good star, come together: for there is room enough in space for all hopes, and why should any hope which God has given us be disappointed? Vincent has not been so well since you saw him, but is now better than he was then; and thus I fluctuate between melancholy and happy thoughts. Now, I wish we were all with you among your friends, and in the New Forest, and in the Isle of Wight, quoting Cowley, and being young in spite of time! We rejoice to hear of Mrs. Ollier's health, and send our loves to her, Mrs. Hunt and myself in special: and so, God bless you! my dear Ollier, prays ever your affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

FROM CHARLES OLLIER.

Bute Street, Old Brompton,
Monday Night [1852].

MY DEAR HUNT,—I was delighted to receive your letter at Lymington, though both Captain Mackinnon and myself

grieved that you could not come. Since then, I and my wife have been to Iceland, and have wandered among the bleak mountains and gaunt precipices of that frigid region, where

"The ceaseless winds blow ice."

Not liking to run the chance of doing duty, in some future Museum of Natural Curiosities, as a petrified man and woman, to which condition we felt we should soon be reduced, we made a quick retreat, and reached home late last night, without having undergone any disfigurement of our ears, and retaining the usual number of toes, which, the first thing on entering our house, we counted and checked by an inventory we had made by way of early precaution.

Our "Iceland" is situated at the *southernmost* point of England, namely, the "back of the Isle of Wight." We went to the most remarkable place I ever beheld, called Ventnor. Have you been there? I could not imagine anything like it. It is called the British Madeira, on account of its reputed mild climate (protected by towering mountains), its dry soil, its foreign plants which flourish luxuriantly in the open air all the year round, and its freedom from frost and strong winds.

And yet, by "some devilish cantrip sleight," when we were there the north wind blew furiously, the strong rain never ceased, and other Arctic influences were powerfully at work. The beauty of the place is certainly transporting, and unlike any country of which I ever had even a conception. But the wetness and the inclemency of temperature prevented our seeing a hundredth part of it; though we inspected some cottages in order to report them to you, under the hope, and almost belief, that such a time as we passed there may never again occur. It will be memorable in the Ventnorian annals.

What you say, my dear Hunt, of me, in reference to your leaving Kensington, gratifies and affects me beyond measure. To see you often, often, very often, again here, and for ever

hereafter, is among my tenderest and most earnest aspirations. May God grant it!

I am anxious to hear how Vincent is, and reckon on cheerful news. Should I not hear to the contrary, I will call on Thursday evening, after I have fulfilled an appointment in town, and tell you the results of our house-hunting. My wife unites in love to Mrs. Hunt, yourself, Vincent and all. God bless you!—Ever, my dear Hunt, yours affectionately,

CHARLES OLLIER.

TO CHARLES OLLIER.

1*st June*, 1852.

God bless you! my dear Ollier, for all your good-will to me and mine; and may we call to memory the icy corners we have met with in our lives—not only many and many a time again in our warm corners by the fireside, but in some exquisite sunshine somewhere nine thousand years hence, where the troubles of the past will be aggravations of the beatitude, and be found to have existed for that reason.

Vincent has been so unusually better these two days, that he says if he should continue so a week longer, he should conclude himself recovered.

Pray, come on Thursday as early as you can, and let me travel with you in every nook and corner you have been looking at. Your account of the unexpected Iceland is admirable. Your affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

FROM THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE.

Brighton, 15*th June*, 1850.

MY DEAR SIR,—I do not like to have received so much pleasure and amusement from the perusal of a book, as your *Autobiography* has given me, without making my acknowledgments to you. And though you tell in it, it was a task unwillingly performed,

the success of its execution calls for the sincere congratulation of your friends.

Your recollections of music and old songs are the same as mine: one of the latter named by you transplants me back into the nursery. The whole story of Christ's Hospital is admirable, and your actors on the stage are my actors, all reproduced to not a bad memory.

How interesting the account is of your imprisonment, and your crime! I had wanted much to know the extent of it: and what feelings of regret are mine, seeing its *excessive* punishment, that one whom I loved should have denied himself the happiness of forgiving, and preventing its fulfilment!

How graphic the history of your first suffering voyage, and what a relief its contrast the second and prosperous one is to your readers—what it must be in reality!

Let me thank you for ether-worldliness, and the Lamb-punned lampooner; also for Munden's pronunciation; but I will not inflict hundreds of similar thanks.

Lord Byron never interested me; but I know and love Genoa.

I want to have the *Songs of the Flowers* complete. And now I will release you; but must add that I was very sorry not to see you during this last spring, when it was my intention to call; but I had a very busy, and, for me, dissipated time. I hope that on my return, after the hay-fever season, in July, that you will let me pay you a visit in your study.

With the last book you sent me I received your positive orders not to acknowledge it: it was the charming *Book for a Corner;* and now I must be excused for acknowledging and thanking you for the work you have *not* sent me.—Believe me, my dear sir, most truly and faithfully yours,

DEVONSHIRE.

To Arthur Gliddon.

2, *Phillimore Terrace*
(Falsely called Allen Street at the road corner),
24th June, 1851.

My dear Arthur,—My ever dear and kind friend Laurence and your daughter join a little party here to-morrow. I wish you would come and make one. I would have come to Hammersmith to-day, to ask you (for I must break up, with whatever pain, my sick, home-keeping habits), but am prevented by proofs from the printer (of *Edinburgh Review*), and by the necessity, will I nill I, of going to town. The blow which has so naturally afflicted you, and the suddenness of which astonished us all (for now that I breathe again from my creditors, I had reckoned upon passing many happy hours with her and you in my new house), is one, you must recollect, which we all have to bear for one another in turn; and if any man in the world can endure suffering, I am sure it should be yourself, who are one of the kindest and best men breathing, and who have already borne so much, to the admiration of all who know you.

Be sure that all that has ever saddened the human species in this perplexing but beautiful world, will be brought right at last somehow and somewhere, both for us who have to live somewhat longer, and for the dear ones who have gone before us. I was too prostrate with illness myself to come to you, when you lost her; but I shed tears with you; and, sick or well, am ever your affectionate friend,

Leigh Hunt.

Recollect that the more you *need* recreation, the more you ought, even in duty to your friends, to seek it. Think what *she* would wish—*probably does wish—beholding and loving you. Marianne begs kindest love.*

To J. W. Dalby.

Kensington, January 10th, 1851.

. . . I was delighted with the delight of you and yours about the *Journal*, and beg you to think me personally coming among you every week; I have a bit of ubiquity of that sort, which I distribute among a certain small particular number of friends, who honour me with their affection, and comfort me by special sympathies, private and public; and the Dalbys and De Wildes are among them. I need not add, how happy I shall be, on every account, in the *Journal;* which has set out capitally well, and gives me double spirits, with hope. Pray sober your "mad-cap" a little by giving her a kiss (as well as you can contrive so aged a transfer) from my venerable face; and with best loving remembrances to Mrs. Dalby, believe me ever affectionately yours,

Leigh Hunt.

Mrs. Hunt joins me in all cordialest wishes.

Phillimore Terrace, 29th August, 1851.

My dear Dalby,—My youngest son Vincent has been very ill, and is advised to pass the next month or two in a locality with a chalk soil. Could you, in your knowledge of such places, point out any one to me, in which you think I could best meet with accommodation? Or do you happen to know of apartments actually to let, their rent, &c.? A daughter of mine, who is also in delicate health, would, I hope, accompany us; so that I should want, if possible, a sitting-room and three bed-rooms, though we should be well content with two beds in one of the rooms, or even a sofa in the other, so as to require but two rooms in all, provided peace and neatness were otherwise around us. Either lodgings, or a cottage to ourselves, would do; or rooms in a farm-house: and our comfort would be much enhanced if we could be near you and yours; though upon this, of course, we cannot reckon.

I wish I could take Mrs. Hunt with me; but she fears she could not go. Be kind enough to give her kindest recollections to Mrs. Dalby, and to the nice little cordial girl who (of her own accord) squeezed the hand of the old author, and (at his request) favoured him with a kiss.

I will not apologize for giving you this trouble about the lodgings. Haven't you, time out of mind, encouraged me to believe that you take an interest in my welfare? Nay, haven't you made me very sure of it?—Yours ever most sincerely,

LEIGH HUNT.

The places which I have in view range about your old borders of Hertfordshire, Buckinghamshire, &c., where I am told chalk abounds; and I have lost time in advertisements. I must add, that a pleasanter or more companionable person than Vincent (though I say it who shouldn't) is not easy to be found, so that I should not be bringing an uncon*genial* convalescent into any neighbourhood that may welcome him. Furthermore, he makes verses well enough himself to be able to relish yours.

Spring Hotel, Ewell, 16th September, 1851.

MY DEAR DALBY,—If I had not thought that in consequence of what I said to that effect, you would have ceased to make any further inquiries, I should feel still more ashamed than I do of not having told you of our success in finding a lodgement in this pretty village; one of the prettiest in all the county of Surrey. (And I think we have got the prettiest look out in all the place, from our sitting-room window,—an ideal little sloping scene of field and cottage, nestling in trees.) But we were not sure of having it till Friday last, and came to it but yesterday. Heartily do I wish we had you at hand to love our walks with us, and give us the benefit of your practised eye. The little party consists of myself, my son and daughter Jacintha (married, but absent with leave), and her little child, who is all but a baby, but as tranquil as the rest of us. We are persons, you must

know (to make our greatest boast), of entirely one accord; and we persuade ourselves, that you would have quite harmonized with us, getting variety enough out of the infinite varieties of nature and of books. You will be glad to hear, that Vincent also is greatly pleased with what you say of him; feels better already, and has done what he has not done for some weeks past, taken a walk. May you and yours ever prosper.—Affectionately yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

TO MARIANNE.

Ewell, 9th October, 1851.

. . . . I had intended, when they did come, [some of his family], to get her to stay with Vincent, while I stole away to obtain a glimpse of the Exhibition [with Paxton's building] and of home; but on talking with Vincent this evening, I have discovered (against his will), that wonderfully as he is recovered, he would still painfully miss his old companion for the day or two; so the Exhibition must vanish without my seeing it, and even home must be given up till our time here expires. Adieu, therefore, wonders and organs, and concourse of all nations, which I must never behold except in fancy. And adieu for the present faces dearer than all, which I nevertheless trust to behold before long. Adieu also my own self-satisfied face in its next interview with the Duke. . . . .

Ewell, 22nd October, 1851.

. . . . Oh! how it has distressed me not to be able to force "articles" out of this *sterilized* head of mine! for so it sometimes appears to me. I tell Mr. Bird that I fear I have come to the condition of the Archbishop of Granada in *Gil Blas*, and that all those convulsive movements in the head under which I have suffered, were intimations to that effect; but he laughs and insists that it is not so, and that all will come right again when I have gone through his course of

medicine. He has indeed comforted me greatly by assuring me that the movements, however internal they may seem to be, are altogether external, and take place in the nerves of the scalp and the muscles at the back of the neck. Something nevertheless, perhaps the anxiety itself, hinders my pen from flowing. I believe I have written *many* articles, as far as length is concerned, in the mere thoughts that have passed through my mind in meditating different topics that "won't answer," and turning exordiums that come to nothing. I will not say more, or tell you of how many other things I think, lest I should distress you. I cannot even find a book to propose to the *Edinburgh Review*. . . . .

Ewell, 23rd October, 1851.

. . . . We should like you to taste the life at an inn again, as you did at Leatherhead, with a view to the plan which I mentioned to you the other day, and which Vincent and I often talk about with serious approbation and hope,—namely, that of actually living for some time *en famille* at an inn, devoting to it a certain portion of our income (large as it might look in the first instance), and thus saving rent, servants, tradesmen, &c. &c., with all their cares and annoyances, till we can find a house to our liking and suitable to our circumstances. Pray think of it as seriously as we do, and let us know the result.

To Jacintha Cheltnam.

Ewell, 23rd October [1851].

My dearest Jace,—Thanks for most kind, long letter again, which, if I do not answer at the same length, you know the reason, and are considerate enough to say so beforehand. Your chessmen, darling, are more than big enough for *me*. I only fear they may be too big for a purse which neither your husband nor your father can replenish at present as they would wish; though, if by some curious saving chance, you

have wherewithal to indulge your loving little soul with such a present (and so it seems), I will not refuse you the happiness of knowing that some chessmen are the very things Vincent and I have been wishing for, to vary our pastimes with, especially as there is a chessboard in the room, and no men to it;—a mighty battle-field marked out for war, and no troops in existence to contest it! Love to Charles, who need never think of apologizing about not writing letters, working so hard as he does. Kisses also to little darling babe and affectionate love from Vincent, as well as from your grateful father,

LEIGH HUNT.

Christmas Day, 1852.

JACY MINE,—I longed to be with you and Charles. I am afraid I shall still not be able to see you for a few days to come, as I am busy with seeing *Cardinomia* through the press, and Mr. Chapman wishes to get it out by the new year, a project which I am afraid is impracticable, but for which I still wish to do what I can. I rejoice to tell you that he and every one else like it the more they see it, so I hope it will take root and do good. This hope, and the love of those whom I love, are an irrepressible consolation to your and Charles's ever affectionate father,

LEIGH HUNT.

To GEORGE BIRD.

Kensington, 22nd July, 1852.

MY DEAR SIR,—In the hurry of my feelings, the other evening, and the endeavour to keep up the spirits of Vincent, I forgot to ask you the result of your inquiries into the batteries mentioned in the enclosed, and whether the serious attention which you thought they might deserve was extendable to the chain. You know, much better than I do, the good that electricity seems often to have done; and I am

sure you are not the man to blame even any appearance of officiousness on my part, on such an occasion. Vincent, yesterday, seemed to suffer more pain than usual, and I was not aware till late in the afternoon that the servant had forgotten to make the linseed-tea. Indeed, I did not know that the linseed was still taken by him, having confounded it with the medicines which he had told me had been "changed;" otherwise, I should have taken care that it had been duly supplied him.

Allow me to add, for the same indulgent consideration which belongs to you, that as you thought proper to consult Dr. Walsh respecting his chest, so if at any time you should desire to do as much respecting the seat of his pain with any one of your surgical brethren, I know enough of Mr. Lawrence to ask him the favour of obliging us with an opinion. But this suggestion, of course, is quite in submission to your own better judgment.

Electricity, I believe, is the nearest approach which the profession has yet thought it has made to the secret of the vital principle, and this naturally sets one's thoughts in that direction, when vitality appears to be wanted. I copy the following passage from an article in *The Times* of this morning, respecting a great storm which has occurred at Sunderland. A woman, who was sitting sewing, "received a powerful shock (from the lightning), and was thrown down on the floor; and, when taken up, she was found to have completely lost her speech and hearing. She was immediately attended by Mr. Dickson, surgeon, and recourse was had to galvanism. The apparatus was brought, and a gentle current of the electric fluid was passed through her frame for about a quarter of an hour, *and she again recovered her speech and hearing, and, although extremely weak, she is likely to recover.*" Pray gratify me by not troubling yourself to answer this letter in writing, otherwise I shall hesitate to send to you in a similar manner again.—Dear sir, I am most sincerely yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

31*st October*, 1852.

My dear George Bird,—Vincent's friend and mine,—I thought to have been able to come down and tell you that you have done everything for the dear one that skill and zeal could do, and that you and I, and all of us, are friends for life; but I find I can write better than I can speak, and it is well, too, in the present case, that I can do so, since written words remain.—Your ever obliged and affectionate

Leigh Hunt.

The next time you come, which I hope will be soon, I shall have the pleasure of seeing you. I took the good medicine last night, and shall be regular with it.

To Charles Ollier.

Kensington, 1*st November*, 1852.

My dear Ollier; dear, kind, old Friend,—Edmund's visit just now was the only one I could have regretted (for the moment) to receive from him, for I had been just telling Mrs. Hunt that I was going to write to you to say what this border of my letter would have said for me, for I should not have had the courage, to *you*, to utter the word. There are sympathies between old friends the very certainty of which drowns the voice. I saw Edmund's kind, anxious face, the other day, from the window, but had not the courage to come down. Do not pain yourself to write, for your sending has been many letters, and I know what you feel. I thank you and yours from the bottom of my heart for all kindness, and I pray God to bless you, and spare you all long for the sake of each other.—Your loving friend,

Leigh Hunt.*

* The following poem apparently alludes to the event mentioned in these letters:—

"Waking at morn, with the accustom'd sigh
For what no morn could ever bring me more,

To Southwood Smith.

Kensington, 3rd November, 1852.

Pardon, dear Southwood Smith, this late communication of what I sometimes want courage to utter. But you were in the country, and so I delayed from hour to hour.

Perhaps you saw it in the paper of this morning.

Thanks a thousand times for all skill and all kindness to me and mine: and may the Beneficence at the heart of the mystery of this world ever bless you.—Your affectionate

Leigh Hunt.

From W. J. Fox.

3, *Sussex Place, Regent's Park,*
7th November, 1852.

My dear Hunt,—Experience might have hardened me to it, by this time; but I still have a melancholy surprise at seeing how greatly my juniors take precedence of me in the final journey. Both feelings came strongly over me when I read a late announcement as to one in whom what little I saw of him (some years ago) made me feel a lively interest for his own sake, as well as yours. Forgive the sympathy of a fellow-veteran, in this battle of life, if it express itself inopportunely during the season of your domestic calamity. You and I have lived through the same stormy and changeful

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And again sighing, while collecting strength
To meet the pangs that waited me, like one
Whose sleep the rack hath watched. I tried to feel
How good for me had been strange griefs of old,
That for long days, months, years, inured my wits
To bear the dreadful burden of one thought.

"One thought with woful need turn'd many ways,
Which, shunn'd at first, and scaring me, as wounds
Thrusting in wound, became, oh! almost clasp'd
And blest, as saviours from one dire pang
That mock'd the will to move it."

times; we have fought under the same banner, though you with the finer weapons, and winning the more enduring wreaths; and it may probably be much about the same time that we both make the "great experiment." Allow, therefore, the mournful hand-shake of an old comrade, whose sympathy for you and yours in this trial will not be satisfied with entire quiescence. I will say no more, for you know quite as well as myself all that is to be said on such sad events.—Ever yours affectionately,

W. J. Fox.

To W. J. Fox.

Kensington, 11th November, 1852.

Most welcome was your letter, my dear friend, though I have not had the courage to open it till this moment. I felt the letter like your presence, and wrung your hand, as it were, looking away from you. There is only one point in it with which I can differ, and that concerns yourself; but how can I do anything but thank you for it, and love you the more, and consider it a new bond for the remainder of life between us. I cannot proceed for tears; but you have helped to make them sweeter. He was all that you fancied him.—God bless you and yours, my kind friend, prays your grateful and affectionate

Leigh Hunt.

Kensington, 28th December, Half-past Two.

My dear Fox,—Your letter of the day before yesterday I have got only just this moment. No fault of yours, nor, perhaps, of the postman's; for it arrived yesterday afternoon, but has been lying, laughing at us, under a pillow.

But, alas! I could not have come, had it arrived a week ago. And how it vexes me to say this, as I could not come last time! But all last winter I never went out of doors, till extracted into Lord John's parties, and there I broke

down. And I have now been confined in the same manner for upwards of two months, the cold having again seized my semi-tropical body with a steel hand, and nearly killed me. Then I never thanked you for your *Religious Ideas*, though I went headlong with almost every word of them (which silence, however, is a good precedent for you, and I hope you will treat the accompanying volume with handsome non-acknowledgment accordingly, otherwise my disadvantages will be heaped upon me). Again, I am not sure that Smith and Elder sent you my *Autobiography;* which, if they did not, it must have been my fault; and, what is worst of all, they tell me that you said something in defence of it in the papers. But I *hope*—such are the strange necessities to which ill-behaviour reduces us!—that this is a mistake. Let me indulge the better hope that spring or summer-time may enable me to come to you; especially as my new speculation is prospering, which is a thing that adds to one's vital spirits; and I have a trick of living, I believe, when most other people would have been dead. Pray make my kindest respects to Mrs. Gaskell. I regret extremely that I cannot meet her in Sussex Place. I wonder whether it would be possible for her to come here, and for you to come with her. I cannot give her a formal reception, for Mrs. Hunt is confined to her bed with rheumatism; but I would entertain you as well as I could in my little study, and give you as early or as late a tea as you liked. Come now. Heap coals of fire on my head by the bushel, and persuade her to the journey.—Ever truly yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

A friend begged the *Religious Ideas* of me before I had finished, on the plea that he was going into the country bookless, and that it was just the book to occupy his mind. And he kept it above a year! It was waiting for its return, that first delayed my thanking you.

To Mrs. Swift.

2, *Phillimore Terrace, Kensington (near London),*
3rd May, 1851.

At *last*, my dear cousin, after two severe fits of illness, the first of which struck the pen out of my hand, and the second seemed to come on purpose to prevent my resuming it, I write to let you know that I am still in the land of the living, and how heartily and thankfully I rejoice in the relationship that opens its arms thus kindly towards me. I began to fear that after losing the opportunity of repairing my omission to one sister, I should be deprived of the power of communicating with the other. How sorry I was to hear of her death! I shall regret it as long as life remains to me, especially as my conscience towards her is not without reproach; for though the bearer of her letter, whom she prepared me for seeing, posted it in London, and never made his appearance (which was the first cause of my delay), and though I put the letter itself into some such safe place as subsequently to baffle my own search for it, yet I ought not to have suffered such obstacles to let me delay further from day to day, till at length she can no longer say she has forgiven me. However, I am a great believer, you must know, in the spiritual world, and in the final commensurate power of all good things with all good wishes; so I do my best to think that she may be looking upon this sorry paper while I write, and lamenting (as far as beatitude can do so) that the bright and kind heart of which you speak, and which is a thing so fit for Heaven, can no longer whisper to us with an earthly tongue. You must be charitable enough to consider in my behalf, that in spite of my own naturally good spirits, I have been in such a bad state of health for the greater part of my life, as to make over-writing very painful and apparently hazardous to me, even when not so ill as I have been lately; and this constant tenderness of brain has aggravated a bad and otherwise inexcusable habit of delay, which haunts me to this moment,

and still makes me, I fear, too often think that I cannot do till to-morrow what would cost me no greater sensitiveness to-day.

I looked with reverence on the handwriting of my aunt Lydia, and am very sorry (or ought I not rather to say glad?) that she thought me so worthy of rebuke in what I said of my grandfather. But why did she not tell me so at first? I would have recanted with pleasure in the second edition; — will unsay it now in the next edition, on her authority, if she will give me exactly to understand what she would desire me to say instead, especially as I never heard my mother, or my father either, speak a word against him, though there was a strong feeling somehow to that effect in the family. I beg you to present my duty to her, and to say that tears of respect and loving kindness came into my eyes at sight of her name, as they did also at what you said of your own likeness to her sister. I should like much to see those letters of mine of which she speaks, though far more letters from her and from yourself; and I would promise to be short in my replies rather than delay writing (for I must say for myself that I have often, perhaps always, delayed writing to certain persons— when I have done so at all—out of the wish to say a great deal). By-the-way, can that excellent handwriting of hers be her own at her time of life? or has she not an amanuensis? My own, you see, will not remain so steady, fairly enough as I begin.

I resume after a little rest :—I have no brother now, alas! surviving. Mine is the sole family name in England with whom Americans have any link of association; but my wife and children are greatly interested in hearing of you, and dear Anne Gliddon will have told you particulars respecting ourselves. We have had a hard struggle of it in life, owing to the reforming thoughts which my dear parents, my beloved mother especially, put into my head, but we do not regret them, believing they have done good; and I have survived a world of contest and enmity, and never was in the receipt of a fairer fame, or I believe a more universal good-will, than at

this moment from the cottage to the throne. To complete it on your side of the water, you must know that your Ambassador here gave me most cordial greeting one evening at the Prime Minister's house, inviting me to his own ; and though illness and other circumstances have hitherto prevented my going there, Mrs. Lawrence has since repeated the cordiality, notwithstanding the appearance of my book, and indeed seemed generously bent on showing me that it had not altered her good-will. She left me to find her husband for me, in a great crowd (he had walked off with Miss Burdett Coutts); but the pressure was too strong to be conquered even by an Ambassadress; and she playfully said to me, with no unpleasant allusion to the different fortunes of poets and great Americans, "I think it is you, and not my husband, who ought to have run away with Miss Burdett Coutts." . . . .

Kensington, 13*th August*, 1851.

Your letter, my dear cousin, found me in a world of trouble, owing to the state of my youngest son, Vincent, who had been seized with a sudden and wasting illness in a manner that astonished as well as afflicted us. He seemed threatened with consumption, and was, at the same time, labouring under what I had never heard of before, an internal rheumatism. For many weeks he has kept us in constant alarm; and he is so amiable that the dread of losing him has become what I cannot describe. I seemed to be able to do nothing, when I was not forcibly occupied, but pace up and down the room and grow sore with anxiety. Immediate danger is now over: he has got some appetite again, and even a little flesh; at least, the doctor assures us we shall find it so, when he is weighed; and we are encouraged, thank God, to believe in his ultimate recovery, though prepared for its being slow. So now to breathe again, and speak of other things.

12*th September*.—This letter has been delayed by the dread of something terrible happening in my family, respecting which I knew not how to contemplate writing above a word.

But my dear good boy (I call him boy, although he is seven-and-twenty) has rallied from a severe relapse, and is pronounced not in danger, though I am afraid he has many a trying week still before him. Please take care not to allude to the perilous part of this subject when you favour me with your next letter, otherwise, I shall be obliged to do what I have never yet done—keep a letter from him. You would love him heartily if you knew him.

3rd December.—Though the preceding words had not been written many hours before my son had another relapse, which was followed by illness of my own, and we have both been in the doctor's hands ever since; yet, as danger has again left him, and never, I believe, was with myself, I am ashamed, notwithstanding the languors of sickness and all the delays which it causes, to look at my last date. Be pleased not to write to me again without taking your own good leisurely time, lest my share should be doubled. With the exception of a single letter on business, I have had no written communication with anybody, save my wife and family and the doctor, since the words addressed to yourself; and I have been in the country with my son. So forgive, pray, and for awhile forget, your faulty but suffering cousin,

L. H.

Kensington, 7th January, 1853.

The border of this letter, my dear cousin, will tell you a story which I have not the heart to repeat. It will also plead excuse for my long silence, and for the brevity of what I write now. I saw him wasting before my eyes for two years, and as the fatal time approached——But how can I write of it? Your letter then came upon me—I mean at the coming of that time, and ever since its arrival—but again I must break off. I beg my respects to the lady who was so kind as to send me hers. Many thanks for the flowers. I have had a letter from Miss Lorraine on the part of her mother, making an offer (which I write by this post to accept) respecting the property at Port Royal. She takes no notice of the offer

which I made *her*, through yourself, respecting the notice of my grandfather in the *Autobiography*; but she greets me kindly; and so, I trust, there is kindness between us all. I cannot, I am sorry to say, yet get my books together, to send you; but when I can, you will see whether or not I am fond of music and flowers. Would to Heaven I could enjoy them at this moment as I have done during the greater part of my life; but I have not yet had life enough in me to replenish the flower-jars which he loved, on the mantel-piece; and I have not yet ventured to open the piano-forte, which he loved still more. God bless you, my dear cousin; pardon my few melancholy words; and, with kindest greetings to your husband, believe me, ever your affectionate cousin,

LEIGH HUNT.

To ANN GLIDDON.

Ewell in Surrey, 2nd December, 1851.

MY DEAR NANNY, EVER KIND AND GOOD,—Do not think ill of me for not writing. Besides other cares and troubles, I have been attending day and night to dear Vincent, who has suffered ever since the spring, till now, with an alarming and wasting illness, and I have scarcely been able even to think of anything else. He is now out of danger, in consequence of coming to this beautiful English village, with its milder air (in a valley); and he has been getting some flesh again on his ribs with the cod-liver oil, which, alas! did no good to poor Mary. I involuntarily say "English" village, from a sense of your being in America; but it truly deserves that epithet for its trees, its meadows, and its remnant of old church, built in the eleventh century, to say nothing of a spring remarkable for its crystal clearness; and though, doubtless, you can get most of these things, and greater ones, in America, you cannot get a village church seven hundred years old. We quit in a few days to return to Kensington, and from thence go to the seaside for the winter, your friend Vincent (who is as amiable, you know, as yourself) being still

very delicate, and every care being in request for him, of whatever sort. I wrote, as you will have heard, to my cousin, of whom you were so kind as to send me so much intelligence, and who answered me in a letter which showed her to be a very intelligent woman; but I am ashamed to say I am but now closing a reply to it, the greater part of which has been written for months—so absorbed, and also so ill, myself have I been, for I too have been all that time in the hands of the doctor. I do not pretend to send you any news, for I have none half so new or so good as that you get from home; only I will tell you what would be one of the strangest pieces of news in the world to anybody who was not a parent—namely, that, even though I lived at Kensington during a considerable part of the show, I have never seen the Exhibition. I waited to go with Vincent, and at last could not prevail on myself to leave him here for a day and go without him. Make my kindest remembrances to your husband, and believe me ever, dear Nanny, most affectionately yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

Kensington, 11th January, 1853.

MY DEAR NANNY,—The same post which brings you this takes letters to Mrs. Swift and Miss Lorrain. Be kind enough to me never to make a construction, unfavourable to yourself, of any delay or silence on my part, the involuntary effects of ill health and of many other personal troubles. I never entertain of you any but the kindest thoughts. How could I, of so much gentleness and goodness? But I have suffered so much, especially of late, that what with biliousness in my blood, and sorrow at my heart, I often seem as if I had nothing to do but to lie down, and sleep myself, if I could, away. This, however, must not be. My duties, my cheerful principles and religion, everything, forbid it; and I now again experience the good of all the adversity I have borne, in the patience which it gives me, and the power to

rally my endeavours. But enough of myself. The border of this letter will tell you the rest, which I still dare only allude to.

Fill your next letter full, if you have time, of yourself, and your boy, and your husband; and describe to me the locality in which you live, for then I seem best to be with the describer. Newspapers, I suppose, tell you how things go on in this quarter of the world, publicly; and your sisters, of all private matters most interesting to you and yours. We have had such floods in England, as to drown a sad amount of property, and even of lives, in all parts of the island; and the rains which saturated the year 1852 are still pouring away. The country, however, is in a more prosperous state altogether than it has ever been, and free trade in corn will now be more than ever prized. A great National Gallery for pictures, including, probably, a general museum, and even the curiosities out of the Tower, is about to be built in Kensington, at the back of Gore House; *i. e.*, between K. and Brompton; and it is to have, they say, a noble garden, in which a portion of the sculpture will be put. When will you come and see it? But I hear Mr. Gliddon thinks of taking you to Egypt. How often I wish all whom I love were in Egypt, breathing its pure air for awhile! but not without myself, as such a wish, I believe, is generally supposed to imply. I speak it in all sober sadness; and, if you go, shall wish it more than ever. I must not omit to tell you, in gratitude, that the copy you were once so kind as to make me of a picture by Paul Veronese was a solace to *him* to the last. It hung in his bed-room, and he often spoke of it, and felt thankful to you. God preserve and bless you, dear Nanny, prays your affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

To PERCY HUNT.

Hammersmith, 23rd June, 1853.

Many thanks for your letter, my dear Percy. You know how welcome your letters are; but still, do not always

think it necessary to write when you cannot come. Think of me only to love me (as I know you do), and for the rest, take care of your health. It grieves me to hear such an account of your cough and chest; but the grief is counterbalanced by the care which you tell me you *do* take; for that, you know, is everything, when taken in time. Also I am glad of what you tell me about the smoking; for there the will is strengthened, as well as the chest, and strong will is a fine fellow when he has a brain for his master; otherwise they are, both of them, apt to take their respective weaknesses for strengths, and then they do nothing but spoil one another. But you have not now to learn all this.

I shall look forward to seeing you on Saturday, but make all allowances if I do not. Only, in that case, write me a word on Monday to say how you go on; and meantime don't think the request at variance with the beginning of my present letter, for a particular request is one thing, and general accordance another. Your dear brother is still present to my thoughts, on and off, throughout the day, though not so long together, and with such tranquiller feelings as he would be gladder, and I endeavour to persuade myself, *is* gladder, to see; and at times that thought gives me a sort of foretaste of heaven. So, indeed, do those who love me on earth. So let us all continue to love one another; and do the best and kindest we can, and thus fit ourselves for meeting for ever in one and the same place.—Your affectionate father,

L. H.

Hammersmith, 1st August, 1853.

My dear Percy,—I forgot, after all, to give you the number in the *Harleian Miscellany*. It is "433 fol. 13 verso." What verso means I know not, but I daresay you do.

Will you take the opportunity (if you have time) of looking for me at Warton's and Roscoe's editions of Pope—6623 and

6624 — and seeing whether anything is said of the Lord Scarsdale we talked about, in a note on the passage?

The passage is in the *Imitations of Horace*, Book ii., Satire i. (probably in the second volume of Pope), and is as follows:—

> "Each mortal has his pleasure; none deny
> Scarsdale his bottle, Darty his ham pie."

Darty I know. What I want to ascertain is, which Lord Scarsdale it was. You need not mind other particulars, unless some piquant anecdote should present itself. I feel certain that it was Nicholas Leake, the *last* Lord Scarsdale of the old creation; but I wish to make surety doubly sure.

I give you a great deal of trouble; but I know how glad you are to do good to your loving father,

L. H.

Perhaps you might as well bring me the vol. Pope, if it contains anything to the purpose.

Hammersmith, 3rd August, 1853.

. . . . Look into the biggest History of England you can find, to see whether in the pacific reign of *James the First*, any unwonted bit of contest took place in the year 1608, to account for the death of a minacious Welshman, one "Sir Manhood Penruddock," who is described in the Kensington parish register as having been "slain in fight" in that year, in Notting Hill Wood.

Also, look into *Granger's Biographical History of England*, to see if you find his (Sir Manhood's) name in the Index, &c. And, lastly, look into a Dutch and English or Dutch and French dictionary (if the library has such a thing), to see for the meaning of the word *Weer* (our friend De Vere's real appellation, as you may remember). I should be glad, also, if you could find the word in a *map*, to see whereabouts Weer exactly is.

Hammersmith, 3rd August, 1854.

. . . . I need not say how truly I sympathize with you all in your present trouble. I thank Emily for telling me

that her mother expressed pleasure at hearing of my regard for our grand-daughter; and if any addition to the pleasure could be given her at present by telling her how much I have been gratified at being told of it, pray let her know as much. I wish there were anything else which I could say or do to comfort her sick bed. You may guess what sort of tears rush into my eyes at these words. I am familiar with them still almost daily, though nearly two years have elapsed. Without the thoughts not a day elapses—hardly an hour—unless I am occupied, or in company. I am often thankful for the other adversities, which gave me habits of endurance. So, you see, I have acquired some right to preach patience.

To J. F.

2, *Phillimore Terrace, Kensington,*
3rd January.

. . . . Please tell D. (or send him this part of my letter) that I lost no time in getting books and memorandums together for the Kensington article, and had written nearly fifty pages of it when I was stopped; first, by a difficulty of getting at some parish-rate books in Westminster (where the portion of the Kensington parish with which I commenced is strangely situate), then by what I have alluded to in the first part of my letter, and then by an opportunity which was given me of completing *Christianism* for the press, and which a sense of duty would not allow me to forego. In the course of the month (I hope, in a fortnight's time—possibly in a week's) I shall be ready to resume for the *Household Words*. . . . . It is curious to see what the houses disclose as you search them, and the Palace and Holland House may be said each to contain a history. I enclose the first five pages, that he may see how much they are obliged to announce; and it is reasonable on my part that I should be quite prepared, as I am, to find that the subject is too long for him. If it is, I shall make a volume of it to be published by itself; if not, I shall be

most happy to go on for *Household Words*, with the understanding that after a due lapse of time a volume might still be made of the republished articles. In the other case, I would write an article on some other subject, to square accounts; and under all circumstances, my dear F., sorrowing or working, I am his and your affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

Kensington, 26th August, 1852.

. . . . I rejoice that you like my *Kilspindie*. Indeed I reckoned on your doing so, and was going to tell you as much in my last letter, but I was afraid of forcing you to write. D., too, likes it, as, I conclude, he has told you. These are payments for the hours which I pass in fighting with *superfluous* words.—Your affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

Kensington, 10th January, 1853.

. . . . The *something hanging over* you is, I trust, nothing but that sense of not being quite in health, which is often a better thing than health itself in point of being a guardian of life. I have it constantly; and here I am, in spite of more suffering than most people suppose—I mean, of more causes for suffering—not unwilling indeed often to *go*, but still willing and glad to stay, at the voice of sympathy and at the sight of joy. . . . .

Cornwall Road, Hammersmith, 5th August, 1853.

Among the books which you will have lately been receiving from the publishers is a certain *Selection of English and American Poets*, containing, at page 421, a sonnet written by one whose name it is still a pang to me to mention. If a kind word could be said of it in the *E.* (and no unkind word of the book, for its sake—and the editor, I believe, is a very worthy as well as struggling man; nor is the selection itself,

I think, an undainty one), it would give a comfort to your old friend. . . . .

Hammersmith, 9th September, 1853.

. . . . . Many thanks respecting the two *books*. The sonnet is surely beautiful of its kind,—graphic and affecting, and all the words right, and in their right places.* Your good word for it would be very precious to me. Every syllable of it is his own; which I should not mention, if some persons had not thought that fathers must needs write for their sons. I pointed out errors and defects when he was writing verses, but never supplied him with a word.

To Southwood Smith.

Kensington, 23rd March.

My dear Doctor,—I was quite vexed at losing the Parcel Delivery conveyance on Thursday, especially as we found it did not go out on Good Friday. I had not forgotten it; but most unfortunately I fell asleep, and they didn't wake me, and so the moment slipped by. Pardon me; and let me hear, if you can, by-and-by, that the books which hereby come, at last, have amused you.

There is *Lobenstein Village*, by the most amiable of German novelists, Augustus La Fontaine; *Evelina*, the best work of Madame d'Arblay (she became affected and Johnsonian in her subsequent writings, though always amusing), *Spence's Anecdotes*, which put us in chit-chat communion with the wits and poets of the age of Queen Anne; *Personal Memorials* of Mr. Best, a very honest and thinking university-man, who nevertheless became a Papist (there is curious matter in his book about Paley); *Pinckney's Travels in France*, a most pleasant and good-natured book, which, when it first came out, set everybody raging to go and live on the banks of the

* A sonnet by Vincent; probably the one *To a Deformed Child*.

Loire; and lastly, my beloved Chinese novel, *In-Kiao-Li*; a work of genius, as well as curious for its national manners, and exhibiting in passages the most exquisite refinement of heart. The notes marked T. C., are by Carlyle, to whom I lent it once, and who read it with delight.

God bless you, my dear doctor, we have talked of you many times, and lamented that you, of all men, should be suddenly bound hand and foot, and tormented besides, whose presence was wanted by so many people to give them ease and comfort. It must have made you excessively desirous to get out. However, from the last accounts of you, I trust you now see your *exit* at hand. As to myself, I am getting so much better, that the pain is all but gone when I wake now, and yesterday I had a whole day's writing. With love to Mary, and Margaret, and Oody, and respectful remembrance to Mrs. Hill, I am ever, dear doctor, most truly yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

All join in love.

To JOSEPH FEARN.

Kensington, 9th August.

MY DEAR SIR,—I write the instant I receive your letter. It truly grieves me not to be able to accept so cordial an invitation; for though ceremony is a very pleasant thing from unpleasant people, and enables one to keep one's distance, yet the impulse that knows how to waive it in the manner of your friends, is a thing delightful. I have often peeped into Acton Priory gate and its "spot of greenery," to the endangering of the tenth commandment. Pardoe is a very attractive name to me; and I can easily believe her friends to be as pleasant as herself; not to mention that I should be very glad to pass a few good hours any day with you alone. But I happen, just at this moment, to be running a race with time and *two* writings,—one a play and one a review, and I *dare* not, for

the sake of others, indulge myself with a holiday till the middle of next month.

"E'en Sunday shines no sabbath day on me."

I will hope for better luck, should your friends not have forgotten me when they return; and meantime, with my best wishes to them, and for their happiness, I am, dear sir, very truly yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

To LORD LEIGH.

Kensington, 25th July.

MY DEAR LORD,—I am writing a book called *Reminiscences and Reflections*, and I have occasion to speak of the last Duke of Chandos. I have a vague recollection of a tradition in our family that his Grace died of an unlucky trick which the duchess played him in a fit of thoughtless animal spirits, by pulling the chair away as he was going to sit down, and that the poor good-hearted woman went out of her senses in consequence. Could your Lordship tell me whether this is a dream of mine, or whether there is any foundation for the story? and would you have the goodness to write me a line about it? I have a recollection also that the Duke was said to be a very good-natured man. I believe it was he who was so astonished at the youth and abilities of Pitt, when first made premier, that he called him the "heaven-born minister."

I will not apologize to your own good-nature for giving you this trouble. I feel sure you will willingly add it to the greater favours which have been received by your lordship's ever obliged and affectionate servant,

LEIGH HUNT.

LETTERS FROM HAMMERSMITH.—DOMESTIC TROUBLES.

The death of my brother Vincent had made a longer residence at Phillimore Terrace too painful. Reckoning that his family had somewhat diminished in numbers, my father removed to a smaller house in Cornwall Road, Hammersmith, and here, with the exception of temporary visits, he remained until the close of his life. His mode of living had become more quiet than ever, and yet it appeared to me that the number of friends seeking him out had increased. He was not unfrequently urged to go more into society, and he made a few attempts; but the state of his health, and still more his own nervousness upon the subject, compelled him by degrees to decline such invitations more and more, until, at last, he relinquished going out altogether. Another nervous feeling which haunted him was a morbid dread of fire. I believe that for many years he never went to bed without visiting the whole house to see that the lights were out; and he has told me, that he never left home to return at night without a dread lest he should see the house in flames. This fiend of fear which dogged his steps was connected with other domestic anxieties, allusion to which can be discerned in some few of his letters, though the extent or precise nature of them cannot be rendered fully intelligible.

Leigh Hunt had an unconscious tendency to make large demands upon a companion whom he loved in proportion to his own esteem and affection. Thus, he set up a standard of ideal elevation, and it not unfrequently happened, that his excessive desire to see the standard attained called forth conduct in others unintentionally calculated to deceive him. If he discovered after however so many years that the standard which he had imagined had not been attained, his disappointment was in proportion, and the depression of his feeling went as far as the undue elevation. It was in later years, having in my own mind a most dear friend who was in no way related to him, that I pointed out the injustice of his behaviour, and he admitted it with that avowal of new light, and of the desire to do better, which imparted such a rare charm to his candour. I had long before observed that, if the smallest appeal were made to charitable constructions, he would "make allowances" for any fellow-creature in the most ample manner; and he really acted upon that Christian principle to such an extent that it helped to perplex those whom he sought to influence, because it appeared wholly to contravene and neutralize the elevated requirements which I have mentioned. His exactions went into subjects of minute detail, as well as general conduct, or even habits of thought. I have mentioned, in a very early page, his demands for painstaking in letters addressed to him, proper language, regular punctuation, and careful handwriting. Painstaking he welcomed as one of the most delicate proofs of affection. "The wish to excel in the eyes of those we love is the first step towards excellence: . . . . true regard may be defined to be a desire to make its object happy, and to be rewarded by that object's good opinion." His criticisms extended even to tones and manner, exacting mildness of demeanour as

the chief of feminine qualities. He insisted upon exertion: "we all lose and gain by the same means." He believed that everything can be done by those who have "thorough faith;" which seems to have meant, sufficient trust in the ultimate returns for endeavour in any affectionate and good-working purpose. He never exacted, even from those who injured him most, humiliation, or even confession of wrong, save such as was absolutely needed to attest sincerity. If remorse was mentioned, he immediately thought of occasions for his own remorse, and exaggerated them. Of his own deficiencies he had a most overstrained conception; and in like manner he formed a very imaginative estimate of powers which others possessed when he lacked them. As arithmetic, readiness of computation, promptitude in judging of prices, and descrimination in the quality of goods, are traits of men of business, he assumed such traits to indicate a capacity for business; and notwithstanding disappointments and mistrusts on other grounds, he believed that he was acting right in handing over the conduct of his affairs entirely to another. There were many circumstances which contributed to make this a peculiarly dangerous course; and I am induced to explain some of the predisposing circumstances a little more fully, since they forcibly illustrate his character, and they had a momentous influence on his life.

In the earlier years of his marriage, he enjoyed a fair income, with a most promising show of increase. Government prosecutions, with their fines, costs, &c., made serious abstractions; but such adverse causes appeared in their nature transitory, while the promising symptoms seemed of a more permanent nature. The event proved otherwise; but declining affairs were handed over to another, in a spirit of trusting hopefulness. Leigh Hunt's personal qualities procured him many friends; the

sacrifices which he was always ready to make for his country, his principles, his affections, or for any who needed help, inspired a corresponding desire to compensate his sacrifices. The zeal and enthusiasm with which he set about the performance of any duty or any generous action, imparted a peculiar animation to the sense of reciprocity in all who came near him; and on occasion he did not scruple to avail himself of such friendship. Some friends were most generous in the manner as well as the amount of their sacrifices. One of these was Armorer Donkin, amongst whose letters I find a formal debtor and creditor account, setting off against a sum of money advanced at a pinch, the same sum "by value received in full per pleasure in reading Leigh Hunt's London Journal." Others contributed active assistance and advice at seasons of trial. I find, for instance, my own dear friend Laman Blanchard, giving minute explanations and directions, as he might have done to a very youthful brother: and in this way, most unquestionably, sprang an immense amount of suffering and mistake. Friends of this kind offered a recourse of a very tempting character. While Leigh Hunt was in Italy, questions arose as to the proprietory of the *Examiner*, which he was compelled to relinquish. I have examined an immense mass of documents, but they are too imperfect to justify even an approach to an opinion. I will merely state a few very simple facts. My uncle John, one of the most conscientious men that ever lived, assumed a position of severe hostility towards my father. It afterwards turned out that he had acted on advices which misled him in his own affairs, and he returned, in later years, to feelings and behaviour of unreserved affection. In the meanwhile, although my father was conscious of ignorance in business matters, and grossly exaggerated the effect of his natural

deficiencies, he could clearly perceive serious faults in the logic of those with whom he was in conflict, and towards whom he ultimately bore no resentment. But perhaps the most serious consequence to him from the whole of this affair was, that he believed himself to be very unjustly treated. Thus, he was an injured as well as an unfortunate man. Any abiding sense of these oppressive troubles, or even a full knowledge of all his difficulties, would have cramped exertions which depended for their success peculiarly on the free play of fancy and animal spirits. These circumstances, it will be seen, formed very powerful temptations for any helpmate to whom he handed over his affairs, and who was desirous "to make the best of things."

The position of the trustee was one of grave responsibility, demanding a peculiarly clear-sighted discretion and invincible firmness in avoiding complications. It would be difficult, indeed impossible, adequately to depict all the crowd of troubles, which imparted to many temptations an aspect of necessity. Let it be remembered that Leigh Hunt was a very conscientious workman, who would state nothing that he had not verified, and would let no work leave his hands that he had not done his utmost to finish in his best style, —the success to that end being in many instances no measure of the effort. The plan of working, the varied and precarious nature of the employments, an inborn dulness of sense as to the lapse of time, conspired to produce a life in which the receipt of handsome earnings alternated with long periods that yielded no income at all. In these intervals credit went a great way, but not far enough. There were gaps of total destitution, in which every available source had been absolutely exhausted. Meanwhile, the work that would pay for all was making steady and certain progress, if it

were not cut short by a break-down in health, which nothing was so likely to cause as anxiety. At these junctures appeals were made for assistance. In some instances, when they were successful, Leigh Hunt knew of the result; when they failed, the object would have been defeated if he had known the failure. He had a dim sense of the protection thus afforded to his weakness. The danger of any such separate council is obvious; and, as time advanced, not only did he cease, while fortified by a passing prosperity, to hear of disappointments which ought not to have been courted, and certainly not multiplied, but he wholly ceased to be informed respecting a large proportion of the successes. It was not until the lapse of many years that he learned either the extent of this veiled influence upon his life, or the injury which it had inflicted. In one instance, when he made the discovery, he wrote,—"Under all the circumstances, it would be cruel and unwarrantable in me to quarrel with you for it, nor do I, in the smallest degree, do so;—you acted for the best and kindest. You will see how little I was angry with you, by the tone of my letter in the parcel." The most unqualified reproaches appear, for the most part, to have come from those who were more or less distantly connected with the family; though I may observe that some members of the family remained completely in the dark upon the whole subject. Many years later, in 1843, a very illustrious literary friend, one of the most earnest and successful in serving Leigh Hunt, writes thus:—

"But I cannot think that you have acted fairly either to Mr. Leigh Hunt or myself. It is not fair to him that applications for money should be made which are not sanctioned by him, which are indeed expressly disapproved by him, and which he feels to be highly indelicate. It is not fair to me

that my letters should be kept back from him, and that I should be requested to join in keeping him in the dark. Mr. Leigh Hunt knows me well enough to ask of me anything that is proper to be asked; and you must feel that what it would be improper for him to ask, it must be still more improper for you to ask without his knowledge—nay, in opposition to his wishes."

It was yet many years later that Leigh Hunt wrote to a friend not less esteemed and more beloved than the one whom I have just quoted:—

Hammersmith, 27th May.

My dear Procter,—I hope you have not been taking me for the most irresponsive and thankless of men; but I have been very ill, and the nature and extent of the information in your letter (though my own had, so to speak, forced it out of you, and nothing could be more proper than your giving it, or more beautiful and charitable than your mode of doing so), gave me such an inexpressible mixture of pain and surprise, that I knew not, and still know not what to do or say, except that I remain passive in your most kind hands, as you would have me, till I can speak further. I blame nobody. Oh! how can I? since the next world cannot speak at all, and passes of this were terrible; and I desire nothing better in futurity than the same faces and companionships over again, only with all of us made as much wiser and better as we desire to be, and blest with the discovery that all mistakes and all sorrows were necessities for the modesty and security of the betterment.

If I cannot get up to you, my dear friend, as speedily as I wish, be so kind as to give me an hour or two here at your earliest convenience; for I have still much to say, and something, however incompetent to what I supposed it, which your great goodness might enable me to discover that I could do.

Strange to say, it was *joy* at finding the bookseller offer me

more money than I had expected for some copyrights, that was the immediate cause of my illness; but Dr. Smith says, that the malady which it set in motion has been growing a long time. Were I able to send you jewels instead of words, they would not undo the gratitude of your loving friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

Even more than any trouble of this kind did Leigh Hunt sorrow for divisions in the family. He always sought to conjure the demon of discord. Whenever he endeavoured to promote amendment, he strove to do it in the manner most considerate. The cruelest pain that he ever suffered was the subject of a difference in the family, in which one of his sons was involved, and he thought my brother in the right. For many years he had tried to avoid any direct treatment of the question at issue. "I shudder to think," he wrote, "of any expressed difference between you." It was long after 1857 that he wrote thus to that same son:—

"There is a name you love which I have not yet had the courage to utter to you ever since its owner left us. Scarcely a day still passes, in which I do not call upon it in tears, in my lonely room. Do not let me miss another dear son, who is living. I am not well, and I do not think you would like me (though better) to continue sick without letting you know.

"I heard your mother weeping in the middle of the night, a few hours before she wrote you that letter. We had been talking about you, and about many things past and to come. Think no more of any mistakes, whether your own or those of others; but come again to your loving father."

The more severe the pressure of sorrow, the stronger his confidence in the appeal to love and to good qualities.

Speaking of faults and good qualities, he wrote from Ewell, while he was stopping there with Vincent,—"The longer I live, the more deeply I am persuaded that the only way to mend the former is to appeal to the latter." But, as strength failed, the weight of the sorrow became heavier. Very few years before his death, he wrote,—"I am alone in the world; I am in very bad health; I have the prospect of worse. . . . I am tired, and would be tranquil. I hope little else, but I would extinguish hope in no one."

This feeling of despondency was exceptional even when it was enduring, and in its extreme it did not last at all. Leigh Hunt's whole teaching of himself as well as others, inculcated the promotion of cheerfulness as a duty, not for the selfish gain of the one man himself, but for the sake of making the happier atmosphere for others, and of rendering the more perfect homage to the Author of all good and happiness. In a letter written on the 1st of April, 1857, he says,—"—— and I are happier, and all things but memory mended; and that will mend in heaven; nay, be better for the worse; all taught how to do and love their best, from past experience; that black background to make their joys brighter. Mind you are a right Cardinomian, in making your evil produce a good." Throughout his life, and at the close, Leigh Hunt's letters were written in a spirit of unbroken hopefulness, and of unbounded affection, without a single exception.

It must not be supposed from what I have written, that grievously and painfully as these troubles influenced Leigh Hunt's life, that life is to be regarded only as one of grief and trouble. It was quite the contrary. The pains, cruel as they were, were really exceptional, and were redeemed by the habitual current of his thoughts. The sense of existence was to him a ceaseless perception

of the beauty unfolded in the Universe. He sat surrounded by his books, and while he paced the room, while he conversed or meditated, or allowed his eyes to wander upon objects within the house or without it, the contents of those familiar volumes were present to his mind as if the pages had stood open before him. In the same way he identified his friends with his own life, thought their thoughts, and shared existence with them. Animated by the strongest affections, but half conscious from his earliest to his latest years of a diffidence for which I know no more expressive name than a sort of intellectual coyness, he acknowledged an unbounded gratitude towards those who sought out his heart, and gave him theirs in return. Such friends were many; and a life filled with the consciousness of affection, of art, and of beauty in nature, could not be otherwise than rich. I cannot close this all too imperfect sketch, better than with an extract from a note by Charles Ollier, both because he is spokesman for a very numerous circle by whom Leigh Hunt was constantly surrounded, and because the sentences are an expression of the friendship and esteem which Leigh Hunt called forth amongst those who knew him in his home.

"Where in our days shall we find a second *Story of Rimini?* where another *Mahmoud?* Where are we to look for a new *Dolkarnein?* From whom may we expect an inspiration capable of *Abou Ben Adhem?* Who is to tell us such a story as the *Palfrey*, where humour and pathos contend for mastery? And where is the other pen—where the other man—trusting and loving enough to put before us an equivalent to the truly divine poem of *Godiva?*

"Dear Hunt, these are only part of your glories. Your life is yet more glorious. You,

> 'Guided by faith and matchless fortitude,
> To peace and truth thy glorious way hast ploughed.'

"God bless you for ever for all the great good you have done your fellow-creatures."

The literary works of this period were the *Religion of the Heart*, 1853; *Stories in Verse, The Old Court Suburb*, and *Beaumont and Fletcher*—all of them published in 1855; the American edition of the *Poetical Works*, published in 1857; and a light comedy in verse, *Lover's Amazements*, performed at the Lyceum Theatre, on January 20, 1858.

The whole period was one of much quiet. The only event which touched him nearly was the death of my mother, who died in January, 1857. But throughout, his thoughts were tinged by the death of Vincent, who I do not think was ever absent from his mind for any long time together. The illness of my brother had certainly contributed materially to colour the leading work of this time, *The Religion of the Heart*, and the reader will find allusions both to the book and to the event which so immediately preceded it in the correspondence.

To Percy Hunt.

Hammersmith, 7th April, 1853.

My dear Percy, my dear Son and Friend,—I cannot express to you the good you have done me by your letter, nor the gratitude I feel for it. I write this after the least bitter, yet most abundant and even shaking floods of tears which I have yet shed; and I feel, that henceforth the worst pangs will have been taken out of them, in spite of the impatiences and astonishments that cut across the heart when one thinks of what is gone, and which it takes such a length of time to soften. I approve all you have said and done, from the bottom of my heart; am most thankful for it; and it will be another link of love between us for ever. Thank you also

for sending your letter thus direct to me. It was a good thing to do, and a comfort to more than myself; and of good nothing but good can come, however otherwise it may sometimes seem by the way.

Love and kisses for the Emilies, and a world of love and blessing to yourself, from your loving father,

L. H.

Hammersmith, 21st September, 1853.

My dear Percy,—God bless you for writing to me so often. I take it, quite, as a make-up for your not being able to come, and only regret the ill-health that so impedes your kindly movements. I know too well what it is myself, in the very same way, not to sympathize with it heartily in anybody, much less in a dear son.

Meantime, I continue much improved on the whole. Margaret has been staying here to "vary the sensation" for me, and does not return till Sunday evening; and in consequence of inquiries which I was obliged to make about getting into Holland House, I have made two interesting acquaintances, in General Fox (Lord Holland's brother), and Lady Mary Fox, his wife (daughter of King William and Mrs. Jordan); and he is a good fellow, and she a good fellowess, worthy of her mother, and I have spent some very pleasant hours with them, and been distrait and refreshed. So I hope this will refresh and please yourself in your absence, and assist to make you quite easy about me till you can come again; which perhaps will be not long after. I am alone again. At least I shall hope that you will then be sufficiently strong again, and also secure about your home and Emily, to whom I beg my kindest regards. Also as I am picking my way out again by degrees, —I mean, in the visiting way,—I must assuredly see you in Hampstead myself, or nobody else will see me at any distance. The book is announced for the 1st of October, and I believe will then certainly appear.—Your ever loving father,

L. H.

To J. F.

Hammersmith, 3rd May, Half-past One, 1855.

I agree so much with a great deal of what you say respecting my poetry, at least in regard to such poems as the *Story of Rimini*, that I had fairly given up nine-tenths of that production,—of my own mere notion, and not in answer to anything which he had said on the subject,—in a letter which I sent yesterday to my young friend Allingham. I do not, however, plead guilty to "vulgarisms" in any objectionable sense of the term, or in any sense; nor, indeed, do you imply that I am bound to do so. But I shall say more on both points, and state my hearty spirit of accordance with you on the former one, in the course of my *Autobiography* (which I am revising, and continuing, up to the present moment, for a second edition). You may observe that I have hinted at some such concession at page 36 of the Preface; but I thought that Routledge might not like me to say more, and I wanted courage (I am ashamed to say) at the moment, to supply ordinary critics with objections, on my own account. I do not, I confess, think my poetry such an entirely thin wash as Southey's. I think there is more colour and expression in it in general: and that he could not, in particular, have written such things as *Mahmoud*, or the *Inevitable*, or *Paganini*, or the sonnets about the *Fish*, or the *Legend of Florence*. But I stand by you, nevertheless, in the main spirit of your objections; have long felt it; and hope to make some little essential salt of extract of myself before I die (not in the shape of those large inclusive books), to give myself a chance of survival.

5th May.

. . . . I believe you are right about Southey's poetry, and cry mercy to it accordingly. He went to it too mechanically, and with too much nonchalance; and the consequence was a vast many words to little matter. Nor had he the least music in him at all. The consequence of which was,

that he wrote prose out into lyrical wild shapes, and took the appearance of it for verse. Yet there was otherwise a poetical nature distributed through the mass, idly despising the concentration that would have been the salvation of it.—Ever dear F.'s affectionate

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 31st July, 1855.

. . . . Should Bohn have sent you a copy of the *Beaumont and Fletcher* not containing the dedication to Procter, you are not the less to understand, that such a dedication exists, and is printed and published by said Bohn. But you know the contest I had with him on the subject, and all I could do was to bring him to a compromise; to wit, that while the general impression was not to be different in that respect from the whole of his dedicationless publications, a certain number of copies of it were to be printed, dedicated. I have one thus complete now before me, which is going to Procter; and you shall, of course, have another, if your own copy is deficient. Meantime, I transcribe the dedication, or inscription rather, which is as follows:—

TO

BRYAN WALLER PROCTER,

THIS SELECTION

FROM THE WORKS OF THE ILLUSTRIOUS POETS,

TO WHOSE GENIUS HIS OWN IS IN MANY RESPECTS AKIN,

WITHOUT HAVING TO REGRET A PARTICLE OF WHAT STAINED IT,

IS INSCRIBED,

BY HIS EVER OBLIGED AND AFFECTIONATE FRIEND,

LEIGH HUNT.

A most kind American friend, hitherto unknown to me,—that is to say, a great and warm friend of my writings, wrote to me some time back, telling me that he was making a selection from English and American poets, of passages relating to scenery, flowers, &c., which was to be illustrated

with fifteen engravings, and altogether got up in the first style of art, and proposing to hand over the entire ultimate profits of the work to *me!* The plates are to be destroyed after fifteen hundred copies are struck off. He also contemplates a selection from my writings exclusively, both verse and prose, with a view to securing me the American copyright, and the profits of it accordingly; this book to be countenanced by several friends of literary distinction (as indeed the other will be), and to be introduced by an Essay on my writings, by the "Right Reverend Bishop Potter, of Philadelphia," (there's a high Christian proceeding for you towards your heterodox friend!) My correspondent is an independent gentleman, only grandson of the first mover of American Independence (Richard Henry Lee, of Virginia), and otherwise related to the first blood of the Republic, Washington's in particular. He encloses me a letter from his friend, Mr. Bancroft, formerly minister here, encouraging his projects. . . . . .

Hammersmith, 8th December, 1855.

. . . . I wish you would suggest to the *Westminster* people a little variety in their fare. I believe they *never* give anything but Terence. Why could they not let Plautus have a turn? or split our sides (by way of refreshment) with the macaronic prose of Ruggle's comedy of *Ignoramus?* They might give a scene or two, if they could not give all. Even a colloquy or so by Erasmus, would be better than this eternal Terence, which auditors who best understand it do but force themselves to laugh at; for where there is a real laughter-moving jest, which is not often (Cæsar, you know, exquisitely called Terence a "half Menander"), it is difficult to laugh out of one's own idiom. And Erasmus is full of point, and often singularly applicable to existing follies. . . . . .

. . . . I have not been able to muster up courage enough to go to a dentist for teeth, though one has been prepared by a friend to expect me there these three years, and half of them are gone. . . . .

Hammersmith, 12th December, 1855.

. . . . The temperate and regular way of life, which circumstances and my book-habits combined to produce, has given me a hold on life which has surprised me, and perhaps may keep me still longer living than I expect; yet I cannot but think that the "beginning of the end" is upon me. The hands, they say, go first; and my hands, firm though you see my writing, have been going this year past, with soreness, weakness, and bad joints. I will stretch this beginning as long as I can, for divers and special reasons. The idea of death has long ceased to be to me what it was; but I am *half* in this world still, and wish to remain so, and enjoy my friends' company, as I always do when I can join them, and turn my solitude to an account still precious. . . . . —Ever your affectionate

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 12th June, 1857.

. . . . In all probability —— will have seen the enclosed article (by Thornton) which appeared in the *Globe* of Monday. If not, and you think it would please him, will you be kind enough to let him have it? I *have* communicated my own feelings to ——, who has responded to them in a manner worthy of him. These things make me turn Pharisee, and wish that all those who sit in judgment upon him, were as little given to scandal and evil-thinking as myself, and knew when to take an honest man at his word. I have some right, it seems, to value myself on this; for I am told that my friends have been libelled all round, and I certainly do not know even what the libels are, nobody thinking that I would have given them acceptance. . . . . Illness—rheumatism—I trust—has not been laying yourself up. I have had one of the worst prostrations (from liver) which I have undergone for a long time; was six weeks all but confined to my bedroom; and am still but in a very queasy and languid state of convalescence. Perhaps it is but the "beginning of the end;" and what might be more naturally looked for at

seventy-four? I often wonder I have lived so long, especially considering that sensibility seems to grow greater instead of less with me, as I grow old; and it has always been sharply tried, between suffering and enjoyment. However, here I am still, and still enjoying too; nay, the reasonable size to which they seem to have reduced my liver, has reduced my left leg along with it, so that I promise even to walk better than before, and that was not badly. So I am again setting the face of my hopes in the direction of Montagu Square.—Dear F., I am ever affectionately yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

*Hammersmith, 14th September.**

. . . . I envy your sight of such real-looking faces of Pope and Sir Robert Walpole,—the honestest of corruptionists,—a veritable rosy-faced country squire in the middle of pale parliamentarians. I know of no visible triumph over time like those,—I mean such portraits. Looking at them reminds us of the One Eternal *Now*, in which some metaphysicians have supposed the shows of existence to abide; and family pride never seems so warrantable as in the midst of family portraits; especially where there are strong hereditary likenesses. You look at them one after the other, and the race appear to be eternally looking at *you*.—Your ever affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 26th April, 1858.

. . . . P. S.—A Mr. Middleton, who does not seem generally indisposed towards me, has been plaguing me by republishing a letter from Moore's book purporting to be written by Shelley, about money requested and received, which it is impossible for Shelley to have written; first, because I never made any such request to him as an applica-

* In reply to a note mentioning a visit to Wolterton, Horace Walpole's place, now Lord Orford's.

tion to Lord Byron for money; and secondly, because I never received any such money. I have been too much averse perhaps from noticing such things; but in truth it would be always painful to me to gather a ring of spectators about me for their amusement with fights thereon, victorious soever as I might be.

Hammersmith, July, 1858.

My dear F.,— . . . . I have burnt your letter as you desire me, and thank you heartily—yes, gravely and tenderly, for your bit of scolding; for scolding is not indifference, and I had been long fancying (I do not mean to be pathetic when I say it, but only matter of fact) that most people, some old friends included, had begun not to care what I said or thought about them,—whether anything or nothing. But all is right, and I am wrong; and that is just what I would be. *Amantium iræ amoris redintegratio sunt.* And above all let me thank you about T., and for your promptness, most quick indeed and kind, in speaking to Sir E. Precious is what you tell me of his words about the "father's son,"—and with tears in a father's eyes I thank you both, come what may; for events may be in the hands of many circumstances. But the letter, I think, narrates evidences of faculties turnable to special colonial account?—Ever F.'s affectionate friend,

Leigh Hunt.

To Walter Leigh Hunt.

Hammersmith, 6th December, 1853.

My dear Walter,—I beg your pardon. I have absolutely, I am ashamed to say, been forgetting you; and Christopher also; whose pardon therefore I must beg too. If you knew my state of health, and how much I have had to think of, you would both forgive me; and indeed I am sure you do. Had I paid more attention however to that passage in your letter, in which you ask me to write in order to "cheer" you,

I should certainly have done so. My heart smote me just now, when I read it. The book, has been out some time, and I have reason to suppose must be doing well in the point of view which it did not contemplate; but booksellers do not send in their accounts till Christmas. In the other point of view it has had some good reviews of it in the papers, and I have received some very nice private letters about it; and people in whom I am interested, tell me it has done them good; which it is delightful to me to hear. One of the letters was from Mr. C.; who requested me to write in his copy of the book the names of himself and his future wife; which it was very pleasant indeed to me to do. The book is very neatly got up. I am glad to find you are so much out of doors, and that you look so much about you. Nature has inexhaustible stores of instruction and amusement for us, if we will but seek them. The question respecting the killing of animals is soon settled with minds that are really willing to settle it, and not bent upon squaring their conclusions with their inclinations. If we kill them out of necessity and for our own life's sake, it is what Nature evidently allows, and for the most part ordains; if we do it for sport, we are taking an unfair advantage of our superior faculties, and our reason rebukes us. We give unnecessary pain, and injure our humanity by taking an unhandsome pleasure.—Do not think that learning Italian will be of little use. Acquirements of every sort increase our powers of doing good, both to ourselves and others; and the knowledge of languages—of *any* language almost—may turn out of the greatest service to us in advancing our prospects in life. The knowledge of French,—and I have no doubt the case is the same with that of Italian and of Spanish, of German, &c.,—has been known to give a young man great and sudden advantages over his fellows, and send him abroad upon the most interesting and important commissions. Suppose a messenger were required, for instance, to go on the sudden upon some urgent matter of government business to another country, and none were immediately to be had. A clerk starts up who under-

stands Italian, and is despatched in a hurry to Rome or Turin. Suppose an assistant botanist is required to explore an Eastern country; what an advantage the knowledge of Arabic or Persian would give him, over competitors ignorant of those languages! Somebody has said that a man who understood four languages besides his own, was five men instead of one. So get every such additional manhood as falls in your way—always provided you have strength and health enough to acquire it; for those are considerations we must always attend to. I have not seen Mr. C. lately, but expect to do so every day. Pray tell me in your next how your health is, and whether you have thought any further respecting what you should like to *do*, and to *be*, in life,—next to doing right, and being a good-hearted, sensible, companionable, pleasant fellow; for on those points I think you have made up your mind, as might have been expected, and all will turn out for the best. But be as particular, please, as you can, in telling me about said *doing* and *being*, in the business point of view; for I often think of our last conversation, and wish to turn it to account; being truly, my dear boy, your ever loving grandfather,

LEIGH HUNT.

P.S.—Tell me also, if you can, some more about birds, &c. I have got a *White's History of Selbourne* for you, as a Christmas present;—to say nothing of a "box," I hope, on the top of it. I wish it could be a gold one.

Hammersmith, 6th October [1855].
Saturday.

MY DEAR WALTER,—Though I had several letters to write to-day, and was in no great humour, or head-state, to write any, yet assuredly, said I, when your letter came, I must write to Walter, and write first, and shorten the other letters; but, lo! in comes one person after another, unusual visitors before dinner, Mr. T. on business, and Mr. H. on poetry, &c., and before dinner I have literally time to write nothing

to anybody. However, I must not waste my paper now that after dinner I *can* write. I rejoiced at your getting to your journey's end all right, and do not wonder at, but heartily sympathize with, your first feelings of loneliness, and am glad you are lodging at a circulating library, because it is of all places the one I should have chosen to take up my abode in on arriving at a new place; first, because there are books there; second, because there are novels there; third, because it contains, or ought to contain—*ergo*, should get if it has not got them—guide-books to the places you frequent —to the district you live in. The first thing I do when I get to a new place is to look for its guide-book and see what things there are in it to make me like it or to remind me of the past, with its antiquities, famous spots, &c. I advise you always to do this. It is surprising how it makes you strike root in a place, and often acquire an interest greater than that of many of the inhabitants. You have quite a right to your feeling of loneliness for a time. It is a loving heart's want of its friends and of the "old familiar faces;" so, as you justly think, you must put your feelers out for some new friend or friends; and depend upon it you will not long be without them (I pelt away in hard writing, in order not to miss the post). I was very glad of your writing to me directly, because you know how I love you, and love desires to be wanted in a time of need, and it is particularly pleasing to age to be loved by youth. It makes them (the aged) feel as if they were good boys still themselves, and only waiting till all, old and young, should grow to man's estate together in heaven—that is to say, after the young, of course, have grown as old as they, in the ordinary sense of the word. But I must not take up the rest of my letter in these subtilties. . . . .

God bless you now and ever, my dear Walter, prays your loving grandfather,

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, October 11th [1855].

My dear Walter,—Feeling that you would rather hear from me, however briefly, and though unaccompanied by the illustrious Virgil, I write accordingly. But you must not wonder at having no Latin this week, for I have not been so "driven" for a long while as since you have been away, and I have more letters to write still. We will Latinize, however, somehow or other, at all events, by Friday next. I do not wonder at your feeling melancholy at first, on leaving home. You are experiencing what is called "home sickness"—a very painful thing, as I know of old, having suffered it to an intense degree more than once, and for a longer time than I hope will fall to your lot. But, recollect, hundreds have suffered it before us. "Hundreds" did I say?—thousands upon thousands—millions. So do your best to bear it, my dear boy, as we all did before you, and be sure that matters will come right at last. Only don't try to starve yourself out of it, as I once did, but eat, and drink, and be jolly. Seek companions, also, as fast as you can; and, meanwhile, look about you, and find out as much novelty as you can. Make all about Newcastle as new to you as possible, and try to put it down on paper; for it will interest your readers at home as much as their news interests you. But, above all, seek some companion of your own age, as merry as he is good, and laugh with him. Heaven has given us laughing as well as weeping organs, you know.

Walter.—"Yes."

And laughing is good for the health and spirits.

"*Yes.*"

Especially when we need it.

"Yes."

Laugh and grow fat, you know, is a proverb.

"Yes!"

And wise men laugh heartily, accordingly, as well as fools.

"YES."

Therefore Walter is sure to begin to laugh soon, especially when he catches himself saying "Yes."

Walter.—Ah, ha, ha, ha, ha!

Good. Go it. Have it out.

Walter.—*YES!* Ah, ha, ha, ha! &c. &c. &c.

Till the keeper of the circulating library sends up to know what's the matter, no such mirth having come to his house before, especially in the shape of so much melancholy.

Your mother, you see, sends me your letters, like a good obedient mamma.

So God bless you, dear Walter, till next week, prays your affectionate grandfather,

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 18th October [1855].

MY DEAR WALTER,—Being still much pressed for time with a number of more than ordinary calls upon my attention, and having a bad head besides, which forces me to write as briefly as possible, I send you, or *shall* send you, to-day or to-morrow, a book which may possibly secure you against mischances with your Latin in future, especially as not having cultivated the niceties of the language as I should have done had my pen been turned into more scholarly directions, I am not sure that I should always have been qualified to guide you as I could wish. As soon as you can after getting it, tell me how you like it, and whether it looks as if it would be as feasible as it has the reputation of being. Also try a bit of it, and let me know the result.

Tell me also how you are, and whether you have found a companion, or what other helps you have met with towards the speediest diminution of the home sickness. Recollect that there is nothing for it like employment, and when not occupied with business, gently, but studiously, diverting the thoughts into other channels. Can you subscribe to the library you live at? If not, we could certainly manage to enable you to do so; at least for a time, till our finances grew bolder, and then the subscription should be for a good long time. Tell me of your employments or diversions, and your

wishes, and believe me always, my dear boy, your most affectionate grandfather,

L. H.

Hammersmith, 17th November [1855].

My dear Walter,— . . . . In the meantime, you must also bear in mind what sorrows and trials, in this mysterious though beautiful and progressing world, almost all persons have to go through, young and old, perhaps every one of them, if we knew their history. I myself, besides other great and constant sources of anxiety that have come upon me in my old age, have had worlds of trouble to contend with through the greater part of my life, and know not what it is to pass a day without repeated visitations of anguish for a loss which I had to sustain three years ago. My ill-health, bad as it is, I hold as nothing in comparison. The worst of it is what is connected with the rest, and the inability it too often forces upon me to do as much as I would.

Be patient for hope itself's sake; and be certain that no exertion shall be wanting on my part to turn hope into realization. Believe me ever your truly affectionate and sympathetic grandfather,

Leigh Hunt.

To Charles Ollier.

Hammersmith, 1st July, 1853.

My dear kind friend, over-valuer of others till you fairly frighten them, and, by a natural but ultra-modest consequence, under-valuer of yourself, from the same excessive tendency to go out of yourself into the being of said others.

Never for a moment fancy it possible for me to be "offended" with you—still less, if possible, that I ever had any reason to be so. You are only too kind and deferential to me always, even when you may fancy yourself otherwise; and were it possible for you to get up some day from your chair in

passion, and throw a book at my head for differing with you, I should only lay it to the account of an inverted love, desirous of having your friends agree with you out of your wish to agree with *them*—your excessive wish. So next time we seem to differ, take up

"Ben,
The Stand.—
Johnson."

and see how far you can try to endeavour to attempt to offend me, by flinging him at me accordingly.

But I must not say more—no, not even about Prior Park, nor Allen, nor *Tom Jones* (though I have read him again lately with increased admiration), nor beloved dogmatic old Dr. Johnson, nor yet your loss—a word I hardly dare mention yet—though, thank God, it could not, in the nature of things, be any such loss to you as if you had ever been much with your brother, or very closely accorded with him—for my head is jaded with much writing, and with inability to leave off thinking, and still turning paragraphs. So I am endeavouring at a holiday or two, and going in and out of doors, looking at the flowers and bits of hedges. But I will have it all out in talk when you come, and you shall tell me everything you saw and meditated, &c. My daughter, your friend Jacintha, rejoiced at seeing your letter, for I had been telling her I was going to write to you to ask after you, and wonder whether I was to have no more Wednesdays; for you have been so kind in that matter as to make me establish a tyranny upon it, and give myself airs of being injured when you don't come.—Love to all in your loving house from your affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, Monday Evening,
17th October, 1853.

MY DEAR OLLIER,—I must not attempt to dilate upon the feelings which your long and most kind letter has caused me. I should not know where to stop, and it would cost me too

much emotion. Your loving exaltation of me frightens a little my consciousness of the humble part which I have borne in the good task, but then I have it in return for the sake of its lovingness, and rejoice for your own and other people's sake in the life-long echo which your own thoughts have given to the books' opinions. Of Edmund's approbation too I am most glad; I kiss the tears in the eyes of your dear wife, and love and embrace you all. The phrase is French, and has been abused; but on such occasions it is good, for it is true, and expresses the inclinations. Come on Wednesday by all means, pray, you and Edmund, if the weather be kind. In such weather as last Wednesday's, drearily I missed you; I could not even hope that you would come, knowing the danger to delicate chests. My birthdays I have not kept for some years, owing to some of the sweetest things that accompanied them, not to be recovered till we are born again; but the grasp of friends' hands who call it to mind must be ever welcome, and to miss yours on any Wednesday is to miss Wednesday itself. —Your loving friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 30th September, 1853.

MY DEAR OLLIER,—Though my head is bad with the day's work, and I have not done yet, I cannot help breaking off to say that I have just read, twice over, *Starlight in the Garden*, and that I must needs consider it, hitherto, as Edmund's masterpiece—the most beautiful among the many beautiful things which he has written. Now and then a word or a spirituality reminded me of Shelley; now and then of Keats; and I rejoiced to discern, in a corner, something like a little bit of little me—the fountain "stir and talk"—

> "Whose sweet low talking seem'd as if it said
> Something ethereal to that happy shade."

For Coleridge's brook, though the elder brother of both, is yet a different fellow—a singer, not a talker; and that, I take

it, is a great difference. That these little occasional memorandums do not hinder the whole poem, or even those passages themselves, after a fashion, from being the writer's own; for it is out of love and sympathy, not necessity, that Edmund ever reminds us of others. That conversion of the old wall into a fruit pleases me mightily; and so does the going of the souls of the flowers to heaven, and furnishing its spiritual floors. But, indeed, the whole poem, every word, is lovely, and dainty, and fanciful, and imaginative, and full of subtlest truth and feeling; and so I think I have vented my love of it, and done justice. But I write to you, not him, because being a father myself, it pleases me to send congratulations to the son through the road of the father's heart.

Robert Bell will be here to-morrow evening, and I shall talk of the poem to him, and read it to him, and I am sure he will talk of it elsewhere, and make people aware of the poet they have got in *Household Words*. I have received a note from him, in which he says he shall be most happy to meet you here some Wednesday, or any day, having the "highest opinion of your judgment and sympathy in all things poetical."

Trusting Mrs. Ollier is well, and begging love to all your fireside, I am ever, my dear Ollier, your affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

Wednesday—Nonsense—I mean Ollier-day—
9th November, 1853.

MY DEAR OLLIER,—Thanks for your kind letter, and for Edmund, who brought it, and for the care you so properly take of yourself. Your *Tales of the Genii* is the right *Tales of the Genii*, and Charles Morell was the *nom de guerre* of a young clergyman of the name of Ridley; and the book, though it affects the ultra-Eastern style, and is too much of a good and bad-boy book, has merit, otherwise it would not survive in repeated editions. The *Tales* are the author's own invention, and, unless early recollections are too favourable to them, there is real interest in some of them, both of the

natural and supernatural kinds, particularly in that of Sadale and Kalasrade, and in a hag who comes out of a box in that of the merchant, Abudah. You will laugh to find the good-natured little literary bony-body, Joseph Spence, anagrammatized in Phesoj Ecneps, the sage dervise of the Groves.—Till Wednesday next, and for ever, your affectionate friend,

L. H.

Hammersmith, 29th November, 1853.

My dear Ollier,—Delightful, every way, is the letter that I have just received. I hoped it would be so; did my best to be certain it would be so; but, of course, certain I could not be; so I rejoice, and am loud, and stout, and feel comforted to my very core; yea, even, I think, in point of bodily warmth; for all solaces and *dis*-solaces hang somehow together. The weather, too, is relenting; and as mine enemy has not returned while it was worse, I trust he is now still farther off. You make me present in your sick room; therefore, so much the happier in your convalescence.—"All goes down like oxymel of squills," says (I think) the Duke of Buckinghamshire, in some half-good, half-bad, critical verses; but thence arises mystical benefit, the origin of which you have so well described.—Love to the "dear wife" from her and your affectionate friend,

Leigh Hunt.

I have just got a "railway wrapper," which has brought greater comfort to my knees than anything I have had yet. It is the *knee*-plus-ultra. Write me a word, please, in a day or two, to tell me how rapidly you progress. A note, on *Wednesday* evening, would be next thing to a visit.

Hammersmith, 7th December, 1853.

My dear Ollier,—It is pleasant to consider, that while I was thinking of you, you were thinking of me, and that our letters crossed on the road with mutual inquiries. I fluctuate, as well as you, with the weather; but as our worst

seems to have blown over, with both of us, let us hope we are only feeling the motion of the waves after the storm. I have never read Sherlock's book, and had no notion that it contained a good fancy. He is said to have been a very proud, scornful, polemical kind of person, so that I never felt myself drawn toward a perusal of him; but now I do, and will make his acquaintance. Beautiful possibilities, thank God, are endless. We have only to imagine new senses connected with invisible substances (the latter, a very easy supposition, knowing what we do of chemical facts and of the air itself, which we feel without seeing); and the senses may be innumerable, and the substance as minute as well as imponderable as you please. Consciousness is all that is required, and love. I once expressed a conjecture, on this ground of reasoning, that all the souls that ever lived on earth, may ultimately return to it, "to inhabit their perfected world." It is somewhere, I think, in the *Seer*, in an article entitled *Sunday in London*. I have just been reading about a Sir John Floyer, a great physician, who had, and wrote upon, the asthma, and who lived to be near ninety: think of that, and go pleasantly to sleep on it. I will look out for his book.—Your affectionate

LEIGH HUNT.

FROM CHARLES OLLIER.

Bute Street, Old Brompton, 9th December, 1853.

MY DEAR HUNT,—Thank you for both your letters, and for remembering me on Wednesday. I rejoice to hear that you have benefited by Dr. Southwood Smith's advice, and envy your power of walking in the open air. I am confined peremptorily to the house—not to bed, nor even to my bed*room;* but I must not sally forth. There have I been, day after day, in my little study, for nearly *three weeks*—a term of constrained seclusion longer than any I have ever endured through sickness in my nearly sixty-six years' existence. You have wisely prescribed for yourself a course

of "draughts of *Gil Blas*," which are sure to agree with you. Like yourself, I have never read Sherlock's book. Though I have been a book-collector half a century, I never had, nor ever will have, in my house a single volume of professional divinity; though I might be tempted, perhaps, to make an exception in favour of old Latimer (a wonderful writer) and Donne. Sherlock was a wretched fellow—a genuine son of the Church—a Vicar of Bray—a trimmer and time-server, like Bishop Sprat, though not quite so bare-faced; a thick-and-thin advocate of the *jure divino* as existing in that miserable man James II., and, after a little coquetry, a mean and slavish adherent of William III.; and all for preferment,—in other words, money and power. He would have submitted to circumcision, and turned Mahometan, had the faith of that prophet suddenly taken root in England and superseded the Christian. It was in reading the seventh volume of the *Spectator*, that I found the passage to which I alluded, being an extract from Sherlock on "Death." The paper is by Addison (see No. 513, dated 18th October, 1712). By-the-by, I was wrong in attributing to Sherlock the use of the word "celestial," as applied to earth even in the beatific state in which it will appear to our souls after they have "stept out of our bodies." Then unutterable glories and ravishing sights will be visible to us *here*, where we are all to remain. I well recollect the "rapt and organ-like note" in the *Seer*. . . . .

23rd December, 1853.

. . . . Now touching the beard movement. If I was one of "the sect," I would call a public meeting of my sistren to vote an address to Leigh Hunt, imploring him not to un-Hunt himself. What! Hunt—the one and indivisible Hunt—with a Jew beard! Fie upon it! Consider. The external appearance of an individual, if continued for many years, becomes a part of that individual. One cannot think of him in any other guise. How would you like to see a portrait of Plato in buck-skin breeches and top-boots? If

you say that this is an artificial difference and wearing the beard is a natural one, I answer that the latter in you would be a more violent interference to all our associations connected with you, than the breeches and boots in the case of Plato. A bearded Hunt would be no Hunt at all, except to those who had never seen him before the metamorphosis. I once, in a very hot summer, cut off my whiskers, and Edmund, then a little boy, on seeing me, covered his face with his hands, trembled, and cried out that I was not his father. And, in the same summer, meeting in Paddington Green one of Mr. Kent's daughters, she also held her hands before her face, and declared she would never kiss me again unless I let my whiskers grow. Now, do not say that these instances, instead of being an argument against the beard, are an argument in its favour, for I maintain that it is nothing more than a horror of the strange, goblin-like effect of facial change. One feels dizzy and bewildered on seeing an object which at once *is* and *is not* the same. It seems a mockery—a device to confound and repel one.

Now, having said all I can against contradicting the memories of former days, I have a mind to experiment in the beard matter. But then, you know, I did not write the *Examiner* in its palmy days, nor *Rimini*, nor the *Indicator*, nor certain unrivalled poems and prose books. I may therefore do what I like, and nobody will miss me.—Ever, my dear Hunt, your affectionate friend,

CHAS. OLLIER.

To CHARLES OLLIER.

Hammersmith, 31st December, 1853.

MY DEAR OLLIER,—Edmund rejoiced me yesterday with a good account of your progress; though you still do wisely to keep in-doors. The winter, though a fine, is a severe one. Let us look forward to the fine spring and summer which its severity is to produce (for one seasonableness implies another) and so cultivate meanwhile the tropical sun in our fire-places.

I don't know whether Edmund told you; but if not, you must know that in consequence of what has been said so much of late in the newspapers respecting its good effects on coughs, and colds, and all chest matters, and its actual adoption to such an extent as to warrant the expectation of its return as a fashion, I have been taking occasion, from my involuntary confinement in-doors, to cultivate my *beard*, and mean seriously to give it a trial. I have been encouraged by the remarkable coincidence of an instantaneous diminution of my cough, which I attribute to the simple fact of non-shaving; that is to say, of not throwing off, every morning, from one's face and jaws and throat, with their pores and tender glands, &c., the investiture which nature as regularly tries to put upon it. I confess I am not brave in encountering the eyes of strangers, even in-doors;—I explain, and apologize, and appeal to their respective philosophies and good wills; and so they respond, and say "Certainly," "No doubt," &c., and are very benignant. But as I shall not be able to do this when I go out of doors, I am still less bold in any contemplations thitherwards. I wish I could wear an explanation stuck in my hat; for I have a horror of little boys saying "Here comes a Guy," or following me and jogging by my side, a little in advance, and looking up in my face.

However, in spite of these infirmities of mine, or the necessity-for-sympathy side (as Bentham would have called it), I shall persevere; only the more companions I can find in my beard-versity, the better. Cicero says (and you know how omnipotent is, or used to be, that phrase, "Cicero says") that if a man must be hung, it is undoubtedly pleasanter for him to be hung in company. So, as there is no company like that of friends, especially such friends as you and me, I want you to be hung with me, and make the experiment yourself. Consider too, you are prohibited from going out at all at present, so that you would be hung as it were in *secretis* behind a screen; whereas I have to present myself to the gaze of the world. *Seriously, I wish you would try the beard.* A man wrote the other day to the *Leader* to say expressly

that *it was curing a disease in his chest:* PHYSICIANS PROCLAIM IT TO BE A "NATURAL RESPIRATOR;" it is manifestly a clothing and a comfort to the jaws and throat, ergo, probably, to regions adjoining; it is manly; it is noble; it is handsome (a consideration for a handsome man like yourself, though not for me): in short, Mrs. Ollier must approve it, and there's an end: for is she not a thoroughly proper woman? and are not such women notorious, I mean illustrious, for their admiration of thoroughly proper men? and how can a man be thoroughly proper, who has not got a beard? Let me see you then, when we meet, with your entire face.—Your (in that expectation) entirely affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

P.S—Never mind stopping in-doors (Wednesdays apart). I once stopped in-doors a whole winter, and was far better for it on the arrival of spring, than I had been for several winters previous. I do not advocate, of course, the thing in general; but times of life, and idiosyncrasies, make a difference. Our friend Jago, it seems, has been in the habit of housing himself regularly every winter like a human mole; and a fine sturdy-looking specimen of the Talpa Humanus he is. People say why don't women, who are tenderer than men, have beards? to which wiser people answer, that women have not got to do the rough and bleak out-of-door work of the world. Railway conductors, I understand, are fast adopting the beard.

Hammersmith, 10th January, 1854.

MY DEAR OLLIER,—I should have written more speedily, but, like yourself, I have had an incursion of business—three articles to attend to at once, and this, with sitting up at nights, has baulked me. However, it is better to suffer from articles and proofs than from coughs and asthmas; and as we have improved in those particulars, we must be content. I got my boots the day before I last wrote to you, but have not been out yet, owing to these new hindrances; though I

meditate my first venture forth every time I look out of the windows, and must set about it speedily, otherwise I shall have it on my conscience as well as my liver; and those two burden-bearers are terrible aggravators of one another. What you say of the arsenic is very true. I have acted upon that consideration all my life with regard to opium, &c., having wholly declined their acquaintance. Still a point remains to be discussed; but enough time for that when we meet. What you said about the beard made me wish to shave instantly, were it only to please such of my friends as might dislike it; but then I thought of the respirator argument, and began to reflect whether they would not cease to dislike it on that account; so I have still taken advantage of my being in-doors to let the experiment proceed. Meanwhile, think for me on that point, and let me know your conclusion, when you write again; always bearing in mind that, when I say "write again," you are not to write a bit sooner, a bit oftener, or a bit more, than suits your comfort and your convalescence; for those are what I desire, on your part, above all things. I cannot see your reasons about *Rimini*, &c., or your non-reasons about yourself; but I rejoice to think your own beard is growing, at all events. Pray go on with it. John Gliddon, who is asthmatic, was here yesterday, in all the budding glory of *his*; and says that by this time next year he hopes to have done with his "artificial respirator" (for he has been using one, but now hopes to be able to leave it off). Love to Clara's sincere face, with the substratum of thought in it. Also to all your dear fireside, from both of us here—those whom Mrs. Hunt knows, and all who are known to your affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 24th January, 1854.

MY DEAR OLLIER,—Capital is the letter which I have received to-day, and I shall look forward to the promised evening as to a dozen Wednesdays crammed into one. We will discuss Dryden, and Bell, and beard, and everything, besides a

new thing which I have been writing about; to wit, a desideratum in English poetry; videlicet, poems written to vent joyous impulses of animal spirits. I have often thought of it, but it was brought into utterance by a charming little effusion which has just appeared in the *Manchester Examiner* entitled *A Can of Cream from Devon.* The author exclaims :—

> "Oh! it makes me fat, and it makes me fair,
> And, were I not bald, it would curl my hair;
> It makes me sleek, and soft, and slippery;
> It turns my thoughts from French-cook frippery;
> It rises daily in my esteem,
> Though sinking fast is this Devonshire cream!"

I have been writing about it in the *Musical Times.* I have also sent off a great batch upon Holland House to *Household Words;* and have been dictating (what think you of that?) matter for a political article in a Review; and Bohn (what think you of *that?*) says he will have the *Beaumont and Fletcher* book; so you see that, though I have been sitting still, I have not been idle, nor has my beard been growing for nothing. Had it not vented its energies this way, it would assuredly have struck towards the table, with the intention of growing through it, like the dead emperor's that was found sitting in the mausoleum.

Seriously, it is a curious and hopeful coincidence, at any rate, that my cough contrives to grow better and better, though my beard is but of a month's existence. I cannot afford to confine myself to the moustache, &c., as you do; for I have, or have had, a regular cough, which you have not. Moustaches may do well enough for occasional coughs; but the cough proper demands the whole hairy investment. Ergo, prepare yourself to see a regular greybeard; for as to "years," I have got beyond you in that matter, as becomes my seniority; and, instead of my juvenility, take the bull by the horns on a new jovial principle (for Jupiter, you know, had a beard twice as long as Mars), and boast of my venerableness, after a father of gods and their fashion. You

see what a cunning movement that is, and what immortal potentiality it implies.

Seriously, again, however, I rejoice in your adoption of the beard as far as it goes, and hope to see it gradually come round to the jaws and ears; for all thereabouts, you know, is tender too, and is better for investments against swellings, and toothaches, and catarrhs. Your doctor is a wise man, especially if he goes the whole (hog I must not say, and goat I will not say)—but the whole Jupiter—the whole Eastern sage. Think of all those beards of old, under tents and turbans; think of them now—how the whole East is bearded still, as it ever was, and ever will be, beard without end. The Chinese, it is true, are unbearded; but that was a Tartar doing, the work of the dynasty that is now being ousted. Confucius came before it, and had a beard as profound as his philosophy, you may rest assured. How else would the philosophy have come?—how have brooded to such purpose?—been so warm in his "nares" (as you justly observe) or so flowing towards his fellow-creatures. Family objection, to be sure, is strong. I would not be thought to undervalue it for the world; or anything which dear Mrs. Ollier and children have to propound; but we will settle all this when we have the pleasure of seeing you both—an evening to which my wife looks forward as joyfully as myself.

This reminds me that I must not forget to fix the evening, since you will have it so. Otherwise I am at home, as ever, every evening. What say you, then, since you speak of the "latter end" of the week, to Friday, or Thursday? Thursday may be understood, I hope, to begin the latter end, as distinguishable from the last; so let it be Thursday, if you can. In bad weather, of course, I should not look for you, whether the day were fixed or not; but, in that case, I shall hold you engaged for the first fine evening after it, always supposing that you still feel well enough at the time; which you surely will, now that you are beginning to go the whole man (*that's* the word!) and are "bearded like the pard."

The Durham police have adopted the beard.

The men employed on the Great Western have adopted the beard. The *Globe* has just said so.

There is a long passage in the same paper on the merits and demands of the beard, which I am going to have copied out, on purpose that you may see it when you come.—Your ever affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 22nd March, 1855.

MY DEAR OLLIER,—May I have a word from Old Brompton, to say how all the dear people there are going on? and will any of you tell me what we are to do with these eternal vicissitudes of the weather? You remember the new names of months which the French Republic proposed to introduce—Nivose, Ventose, Pluviose, Germinal, &c. Somebody, with capital rhythmicosity, translated those four words into Snowy, Blowy, Flowy, Growy. Perhaps our last four months might be characterized as Snowy, Snowy, Snowy, Snowy; for I am told that there was not only snow falling again the day before yesterday, but that a lump of it, never melted, was actually lying in Hyde Park. Snowy, Blowy, Flowy, and Growy, might designate our four last *days*; or the hours might be varied with Summery, Flummery, Warmth-never-Comery; for we really have had a blink or two of fine weather, only to shut its eyes again for cold, with all but icicles hanging upon their lashes. I picture you to myself in the meantime housed with your fire and books, and not bothered, as I have been, and am, with proofs and revises; for I have no sooner done with the *Stories*, than I am beset with the *Kensington*. The *Stories*, with new preface, and notes new and old, make a volume of 356 pages; and the *Kensington* makes two volumes. I have just shaved off my sick-room beard, and the doctor says I may venture out of doors next week, provided there is no east or north wind. Now, please, as I have told you all about myself, like a right egotistical friend, who knows himself to be of importance to his Bromptonians, tell me all about

yourselves, and count yourselves all embraced by your affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 6th June, 1855.

MY DEAR OLLIER,— . . . I cannot come to dinner, for I still dine at one; nor then can I well get out before three; but this will enable me to arrogate an early tea in Old Brompton, when we will have a set-to at our old beloveds in books and bowers; and if you are not yet valiant enough to risk east winds *hitherwards*, I trust I shall be able to come to you thitherwards, and so recover somewhat of our charming old Wednesdays. The Bohns and Blacketts are making haste with their books; and you will see by the enclosed (which keep, please, till I come,) that the Scotch critics, agreeably to the jovial reels and songs in which their countrymen surpass us, have been recognizing in me that one constituent half of myself (the animal spirit half) which seems to remain unknown to their more solemn brethren on this side Berwick-upon-Tweed.—Dear Ollier's ever affectionate

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 9th June, 1855.

MY DEAR OLLIER,— . . . . The tears came into my eyes at your account of your dear wife, though while they were half-dimming them, I became amused at your long list of wonders, and afterwards laughed aloud at the Baconian hypothesis respecting Shakspeare. As to talk of "dying," and "all that," it is what a septuagenarian must not allow in so lively a junior, except as a poetical indulgence.

On Wednesday next, then, my dear friend, expect me, please Heaven, as close upon five o'clock at latest (I hope earlier) to the tea which ensues thereafter at your accustomed hour, whatever that may be. The more customary the link with your household habits, the more I shall feel what I really deserve to feel; to wit, that I am at home with you.—Your affectionate

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 21st June, 1855.

My dear Ollier,—I should have thanked you for your letter immediately, but was kept in a state of impossibility by the printer; who, after I had twice thought my work finished, besieged me for "more last words" for the book on Kensington; of which, unfortunately, two volumes have been made instead of one; so that I had to do what I could towards the plumping out of their tenuity. And he, being a good-natured man, did what he pleased with me.

You did the properest thing in the world in accepting the invitation to Ham; and I have been rejoicing to think what weather you have got to meet you. Fine weather, old trees, the placidest of rivers, a genial host and hostess, Thomson up above you, Pope near you, Cowley himself not a great way off, even the best part of home along with you in the shape of a loving wife; I hope here is a nest of repose, both material and spiritual, of the most Cowleian and Evelynian sort, such as the Ollierian soul deserveth. Ham, too, you know, is expressly celebrated both by Thomson and Armstrong; and though that infernal Duke of Lauderdale lived there, who put people to the rack (in the *first* old original Ham House, I believe—he married a Dysart), yet even the bitter taste of him is taken out of the mouth by the sweets of these poets, and by the memories of the good Duke and Duchess of Queensberry (Prior's Kitty), who nursed their friend Gay there when he was ill. Ay, and when he was well; and *upon* ham as well as in it; for you know he was a great eater; which made him, of course, ill again; and then they fed him on teas, and syllabubs, and ladies'-fingers, and again made him well, and able to be ill another time. And he was a punster too, was Gay, and doubtless punned as well as feasted on ham; which together with the thought of your comforts, and the recollection of your "tranquillity" at the back of the charming Claude, and Thomson's and Armstrong's epithets of "embowering" and "umbrageous," compels me to pun too, and wish you may have your fill of "Ham and green *peace*."

Edmund's poem is beautiful; justly and finely imaginative on an imaginative subject; which makes all his thoughts and analogies as pertinent, as the sticking in of images upon subjects that are not so, too often renders very splendid-looking poetry otherwise. It is, I think, one of Edmund's very best, nay, *the* very best; the one in which you can least find a word to quarrel with, if any; and will be admired a hundred years hence. But I have been beforehand with him on one of his points, the eyeless gaze. See *Wallace and Fawdon* towards the close. This one point, however, he can well afford to spare me out of his riches. . . . .—Your ever affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 4th July, 1855.

MY DEAR OLLIER,— . . . . Meantime I trust you go on prospering, and are constantly in the open air, or admitting it, and so strengthening your lungs against inhalements of carpets. Jackets, either of Brussels or Kidderminster, were not intended, believe me, to be worn *inside*.

I had got my new book ready packed to bring you, and the volume containing the passage about Watteau, and an account of some delightful hours which Dickens gave me here yesterday evening; and at a quarter to six o'clock, was obliged to give all up.

Love to all the loving, and to the lovely, immortal spirit of Mendelssohn.—Your affectionate,

LEIGH HUNT.

P.S.—By a curious effect of the evening sunshine, my little homely black mantel-piece, not an inelegant structure, you know in itself, is turned, while I write, into a solemnly gorgeous presentment of black and *gold*.

How rich are such eyes as yours and mine, how rich and how fortunate, that can see visitations so splendid in matters of such nine-and-twopence!

Hammersmith, 26th July, 1855.
Thursday.

My dear Ollier,—Rain, rain, rain! alas! alas! alas! Item, lumbago;—which is, perhaps, the rain also.

I always have a particular wish to come to Bute Street; and to-day the wish is particularly particular, because I wanted to speak to Edmund, and detail to him, in all their literality, those critical feelings of mine respecting myself, the spirit of which I described to you the other day, and which said spirit I hope, and daresay, you have described to him yourself. I wished to set him thoroughly at his ease respecting any objections which he might secretly feel, and therefore wish that he could make without discomfort to his old friend, and to make which might do good both to his article and to his critical repute and standing with his employers. In my preface I thought too much of those who object upon prejudice or with limited sympathies, and I did not sufficiently confine what I said about imaginative superfluities to narrative poetry, and to such narrative poetry in particular as did not treat of imaginative subjects. All this I shall set right in the conclusion of my *Autobiography*, or previously, I trust, in that American selection of my writings which my Washington friend has proposed. There is a passage also in my preface, towards the close of it, in which I intimate certain differences of opinion with my own former self, as regards the style or poetic manner of the *Story of Rimini*, and upon this hint I should have been quite willing that Edmund should have spoken, or should now speak, and so do (for me) what I partly did myself, half for the reasons above mentioned, and half perhaps out of a sort of parvanimous wish not to assist the critics there alluded to; nay, also out of something of a wish not to disconcert Routledge and seem not to be eccentrically damaging his and my goods. In short, most heartily welcome is dear Edmund to speak all his mind about my poetry, such as it is, *con* as well as *pro*, knowing as I do, not only out of what a right to speak he would do so, but with how much kindness and respect,

nay, with what reflection of filial tenderness from his father to his father's friend, and his own. Besides, there is my old vivacity which he would concede to me, and I fear I should only be thought to fare too well after all. It may be thought hard to part with certain amounts of poetical repute; and so, indeed, it is at first, and always, perhaps, to enemies. But there are trials which at last render every other kind of trial comparatively easy, and to such friends as we know to love us, I find that the parting with any kind of self-love becomes in some sort not only easy, but delightful.

Here is a long letter, which I intended to be no more than a scratch! Love to all from your affectionate

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 8th October, 1855.

. . . . Thanks for news of Anderson, and of Mrs. Chatterley, and of the *Morning Post*, which I have not yet seen, but of course will see. Also of *Ghost Music*, which I shall look after forthwith. Mrs. Chatterley is heartily welcome to any or all of my articles on the Lady Poets; but the best (*i. e.* latest corrected) edition of them will be found in *Men, Women, and Books*, which I believe you have. I have very pleasant recollections of her on the stage, and as I must have written accordingly about her, I can easily conceive that she feels kindly towards myself. As to you, her presiding genius, I need not say what I feel respecting *your* intentions.

With love to your good sons, and your good wife, and your good self, I am ever, my dear Ollier, your truly affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

P.S.—The chance of being known, and liked a little in "Scandinavia," is payment for the long love I have borne for all kinds of reading about Sweden, Denmark, and Norway above that respecting any other of the northern nations, except Scotland. I have often, indeed, wondered at it, and think it must be owing to my early reading of *Gray's Odes*.

How much do I not owe to Gray, and how I love *him*. I have not forgotten the *Beaumont and Fletcher*.

Hammersmith, 4th July, 1856.

My dear Ollier,—Though I am forced to differ more than I can express with your estimation of my faculties, yet the warmth of friendship which induces you to make it cannot but affect me deeply; and I thank you from the bottom of a heart to which sympathy is very precious, especially from one whom I have known so long, and for whom I have entertained a regard endeared by so many congenial hours, full of delightful talk and delightful books. Next week I verily believe that I shall be able to send off both of *my* books for America. Do you not think you could come and give a look at them before they go?—next Wednesday, for example; *the* Wednesday—immortal Wednesday, I hope—to be carried on somewhere *for ever*, in a finer realization of all which is good and hopeful on earth?

Pray write and say so directly, that I may have the pleasure of enjoying it before-hand every day meanwhile.—Your grateful and affectionate friend,

Leigh Hunt.

Hammersmith, 2nd December, 1856.

My dear Ollier,— . . . . Mrs. Hunt and myself have both suffered more than commonly, she with cough as well as rheumatism, and I with cough and bronchorœa; and whenever we are getting a little better, an additional hard *screw* of the weather returns and produces our bad again. So we are praying for no snow, and no north and east wind. Among his medicines the doctor has ordered me wine, and it really seems to have put muscle into me and upheld me; so that I am writing "West End," and have written an article on Christmas for the *National Magazine*.

The reason why the date of the most melancholy of days was not present to me when I wrote to you a little time since, was, that whenever October comes round, I take pains to

hinder myself from becoming aware of it, by ceasing to note the dates of the days for weeks previous.

God bless you, my dear Ollier, and may loss on earth only mean increase of gain to us in another world, as I believe, thank God, it does. So let us live on as cheerfully as we can in that belief, and fighting confidently with frost and snow. For you and I, you know, are very vital people, only we have got to take care that we fight under cover, housed and castled, like Cotton's people, against the besieger, winter.—Your affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 28th January, 1857.

MY DEAR MRS. OLLIER,—The border of my letter will tell you of the grief which is in this house. It fell upon us on Wednesday,—not unexpectedly—everybody who has seen appearances could not but look for it—yourself, I dare say, among the number—but how grievous such grief comes, however we may have tried to feel prepared for it, your kind heart need not be told. I write to you instead of your husband, because he feels about death even more than so vital a man should, and because you will break it to him with all your kind experience of what best accords with him. He will not take it, I am sure, as a slight. He will only think that I have looked the news, as it were, at yourself first, and then left it to be looked at him by your dearer face. And I think mine a dear one, too; as I hope shortly to prove by showing it him in Bute Street.

Kindest love to all who belong to you. I know I have sympathizers in them—every one.

She had a great regard for you, dear Mrs. Ollier.—Your affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

She was looking forward, not long ago, to the pleasure I should have again in the summer, in seeing Ollier. Great will that be. But greater than all, I do believe, awaits us in the world where the sight of faces will never be lost.

Hammersmith, 13th June, 1857.

My dear Ollier,—Although, or rather because, the good news you tell me was no more than your due, or than what I expected from the truly noble institution that does such good and just things, greatly do I rejoice in your joy, and beg you will speak of it again and again to Mrs. Ollier the first thing in the morning; that is, I mean, once thus daily, the first thing when you awake; because it will help, if not thoroughly to divert more melancholy thoughts, yet to divide them; and I know well what that necessity is. I am obliged to have recourse to such arts myself, as far as I can; my sole talk at that hour being now—ah, me!—confined to myself, I no longer possessing your incalculable blessing.

. . . So, you see, all of us old boys have our infirmities. The only thing which remains for us to do is to make the best of them; the cheerfullest even when dolefullest, or where threatening to be such; and thus propitiate fate and chance, and go out, when we *do* go, in a cadence of love and harmony; for our cadence, mind, is to be a long one; and when we think it is ending, is to have (as it *has* had) several *da. capos*—encores, I should say; for it is loving friends who are to make them. So, when you talk of being "querulous," I shall look upon it only as a passing movement in E or B flat, and expect you, next moment, to be in the key of C again, that is of Cowley, and of all Country-lanes and Comfortabilities, not omitting Cornwall Road.—Dear Ollier's ever affectionate friend,

Leigh Hunt.

Hammersmith, August 13th, 1857.

My dear Ollier,—A tremendous divine said that hell was paved with good intentions. I suppose the reverend gentleman went to heaven through a kennel of bad ones. However, I must needs own that good intentions on my part are often severely punished, and justly, too; only it is that horrible fellow, delay, that brings them into the scrape. Once last week, and *twice* this week, have I been going to write to you

to ask whether there were to be no Wednesdays this summer, or rather no Ollierdays (for you know how the list of the week-days used to run,—Monday, Tuesday, Ollierday, Thursday, Friday, &c. I do not Italicize the word, for that would be taking it out of the catalogue—*category*, I mean—of its customaries. It had ceased to be a surprise. It had become an ordination—a usage, a thing in the calendar—and all the world acknowledged it. You had displaced Woden. Nobody made a difference in pronouncing the word. The enumeration smoothly flowed on as a matter of course;—Monday, Tuesday, Ollierday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday. Well, but now you are to change it to Saturday. Well and good. The gods can do what they please; and as Wednesday this week is gone, assuredly I rejoice that the new Ollierday is still to come.

Oh! my dear Ollier, I should have been with you myself before this, in spite of vicissitudes of health, &c.: but I have been waiting day by day at home, in the hope of the promised visit from my American friend's brother, and he has not come yet. I have been only twice out, even after dark; twice in Kensington, and once in Hammersmith, and then only to greet friends from Ireland, and an invited neighbour. I would have begged you and Edmund to come to dinner, but for an obstacle, not otherwise of importance, which will prevent me on that particular day; so you must both of you make me amends by coming as soon as you can according to your own after-dinner proposal; and by way of making the most of our day, we will have such an early tea that it shall be called breakfast, and then our supper will be our dinner. A thousand thanks for what you say about the Prefaces of your ever affectionate,

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 23rd January, 1858.

MY DEAR OLLIER,— . . . . As for my own "nocturnal goings abroad," this, alas! has been my single going since I went to "inaugurate" (!) the working classes' music; and

before that, I had been but twice to members of my own family when they were sick and in trouble, and the same to Procter and Forster, about the time when I came to you. For as many years past, I do not believe I have been more than a dozen times inside of town, including even my visits by day, with the exception of some most melancholy, and on a most beloved account, to a medical acquaintance.

The press, thank God! appears to be as unanimous in its kindness as the house was.* Not a particle of the public pulse seems to have abated in the fervour of its goodwill towards its old friend and servant; and I am pleased and grateful accordingly. But there were mourning blots in my joy, especially when I got home, and could not go direct into one particular room. And now the Duke of Devonshire is gone, whom I hoped to please so much with the success promised me, and who would have written me such a charming letter, whether I had succeeded or not. And yet there are people who say there is no such thing as the completion of things in another world!—Love to all your loving house from your affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

FROM CHARLES OLLIER.

Bute Street, Old Brompton, 11th March, 1858.

MY DEAR HUNT,—I returned to you the other day your *Carruthers* and *Fraser*. In the hurry of finding your books while the man waited, I nevertheless found a minute to write seven words to you on a little bit of paper which I hastily placed in the parcel. The words amounted to nothing but thanks. Still I should be vexed if the modicum of stationery had fallen to the ground and been overlooked, leaving me bare to the accusation of not saying "thank'ee."

How are you? and how is Jacintha? I am as ill as

* On the first performance of *Lovers' Amazements* at the Lyceum Theatre.

possible. When I am "put to bed," I go speedily to sleep; but, as the ladies say, my "gettings-up" are very bad.

"Here be truths!" truths! Yes; God has made us to love truth above all things. But he has made us to love *also* falsehoods, provided they are innocent and pleasingly uttered. For example: a minute or two ago, I was reading the Poems of Thomas Warton, and was, in a manner, charmed by his "Ode" (which is no *Ode* at all) called the *Hamlet, written in Whichwood Forest.* The commonplace and conventionality of these lines are staringly apparent. Yet, somehow or other, the poem lulls one, like a flattering dream. We know that there are not—never were—such "hinds" as he describes. The verses are an embodiment of a monstrous lie; but we resign ourselves to the delusion.

"Pleasant, but wrong." Warton was ignorant of your art to fascinate your readers without a single violation of truth. You are, I verily believe, the only uncompromising truth-teller in existence, whether in prose or verse or by word of mouth.

And so, my dear Hunt, God bless you!—Ever your affectionate friend,

CHAS. OLLIER.

To CHARLES OLLIER.

Hammersmith, 12th March, 1858.

MY DEAR OLLIER,—I am ashamed to say that I duly received your words; that I doubted whether I might not have sent you some in return; and that I now find, as is usual in such cases, that the very doubt ought to have told me I *should.* Nothing, however, could have hindered me but the fact of my running a race with time; as I still am, which is the reason why, even now, I write so shortly as I do. Reasons for work have increased of late, notwithstanding my bit of success at the Lyceum; and I am anxious to get my *West End* out as quickly as possible.

Pray meet the beautiful promising sunshine with your

best welcomes,—you who know how to do it so much poetical justice. The good of poetry, you know, is to turn it to its best account in prose matter-of-fact. So I expect you, for my sake as well as for the sake of all of us (for you know we all belong to one another) to be very gay, and vernal, and daffodillian; especially as you have had, or made, so much a better winter of it than the last; and June is coming again, towards which (including certain powers of cross-country cabs) I am working.

I love the tears of you and your dear wife over my Chaucerisms, for your sakes as well as my own; and am ever, my dear old friend, most affectionately yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

To EDMUND OLLIER.

Hammersmith, 22nd December, 1857.

MY DEAR EDMUND,—Sudden demands on the part of matters of business are too often things inexorable, as we must all have experienced; so that I do not at all wonder at our having been forced to lose the pleasure of ——'s company last evening: and as to yourself, you surely did the best thing you could do for everybody's sake in giving up your attempts to encounter rainy and un-omnibused roads during such turbulent weather. For my own part, you know what a fixture to my fireside I am, so that no disarrangement was done to me, beyond the postponement of my pleasure; for such I had the confidence to regard it; and from that I took refuge—where do you think? In a blacksmith's shop.

"In a blacksmith's shop?"

Yes; kept by one Care, who lives by the "Hill's Side," in a place called Fairy Land.

"There, where the mouldered earth had cav'd the banke."

His number is 33, book 4, canto the 5th, in the strange topography of that district. Alas! he made me feel too much

at home; so I went back for solace to the terrible fight of our old triple-minded friends, Piramond, Diamond, and Triamond, with Canace's brother Cambell, where indeed I had lately left off in my—I know not what-*th* reading of the book;—whether my fiftieth or hundredth; and found myself, as usual, marking fresh passages, and feeling new wonders and admirations; though I took my old reverential liberty of a laugh at their excessive "trinal triplicities" in stanzas 41 and 42. Item at the rhyme "clap" in stanza 43; which is the more strange, inasmuch as it was not absolutely forced by rhyming necessity; for Spenser, of all men, might have made beautiful use, in such a passage, of the word "*lap*." Look at it, and tell me you think so, when I next see you. Write again you mustn't. I know too well of old the calls upon hebdomadal pens, especially as the week advances.

As the journey of you and —— is only postponed, I have, after all, been a gainer by my loss, since it produced from him the letter which you have been so good as to show me. Tell him how sensible I am of its kind expressions about me, and with what payment for many sufferings such things remain in my mind. Nay, show him, if you please, this letter; that so I may still have a bit of chat with you both, last evening notwithstanding. Love to Thornton, if you see him. Also to your dear father and all your fireside.—Affectionately ever,

LEIGH HUNT.

To G. J. DE WILDE.

9, *Cornwall Road*,
Hammersmith, 15*th October*, 1853.

MY DEAR DE WILDE,—I have just put forth another book the advertisement of which you may have seen,—the *Religion of the Heart*. It has been the most anxious and pains-taking book of my life; for which nothing can ever pay me, or was expected or desired by me to pay me, but the good I hope it will do to the parties for whom it was designed: but as I had no right to assume that you were one of those parties, and it

is extremely heterodox, and will be held lawless alas! by many good people who perhaps would not like you to know it, I have not given the usual direction for a copy in your instance. Pray give kindest remembrances for me to Dalby and all whom that genial name includes, and believe me ever, dear De Wilde, affectionately yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

P.S.—I am getting better again after a year of anguish:—I should, rather say three years. But He has made futurity look more beautiful to me, more desirable, though I blaspheme not, God knows, the ever beautiful though perplexing earth.

Hammersmith, 6th December, 1853.

MY DEAR DE WILDE,—You please me very much indeed by finding a spirit to approve in the *Religion of the Heart*, "heterodoxy notwithstanding;" and I take you to *my* heart, my dear De Wilde, for what you say to me on the other subject on both our accounts. It haunted me like a monomania for eight months; and not a day passes yet, in which I do not undergo many returns of anguish, often even of astonishment in the anguish,—pangs of wonder in the novelty. He had scarcely ever been away from me all his life. Your retrospections, fortunately now, are remoter; but still— These things, however, help to make heaven surer, and death, how much less bitter!—even though we have other dear friends to leave.

I was highly gratified by what Mr. Vernon Smith was so kind as to say of me in his lecture. I say so "kind," because as the "world" goes, he need not have said it of me, whatever he might have thought; and for such good-nature one is and ought to be, grateful. Do you know him? and do you think he would like me to thank him? If so, I would trouble you to tell me where my thanks would soonest reach him.—Your truly affectionate,

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 6th June, 1859.

My dear De Wilde,*—You may judge what pleasure I felt at sight of the lines on *The Summer of* 1818, as I had sought them in vain in all directions, but the one which has sent them to me, uncalled for. It was not that I was insensible of your kindly zeal towards me and my writings, but I had not imagined that you had known them so far back. What made me so desirous of recovering these verses, is that Wordsworth expressed a regard for them—no *habit*, you know, of his, towards my verses—which gives me a kind of sneaking satisfaction, when approbation comes. I felt once the same shabby pleasure, when told of his taking down my poems from a shelf at a bookseller's, to show some persons present how swimming ought to be described;—to wit, after the manner of the passage in *Hero and Leander*.—Your ever affectionate friend, Leigh Hunt.

To J. W. Dalby.

7, *Cornwall Road, Hammersmith,*
25th October, 1854.

God bless you, my dear Dalby! Your verses, worthy in every respect of the fine nature from which they flow, came with their balm upon me at a moment when I happened more than usually to need it. The cause of the need was temporary, and even absurd, excessively so; but a man may be gravely annoyed, even with the supposed necessity of setting right an absurdity; and you will see what it was, when I send you a fourth volume which I have been invited to add to a certain autobiography. In the same pages, you will see also a little word of grateful friendship, which I hope will not displease you.

* In reply to a note from Mr. De Wilde touching the final collection of Leigh Hunt's poems. The writer asks whether "you have unearthed the two sonnets which I enclose from the *Examiners* of 1815–16. I hope they are not among the 'crudities' at which you hint." And the same protest is made on behalf of the little "serenade," from an early *Examiner, On the Summer of* 1818.

I dare not ask about the "one missing." Tears come into my eyes to think what you must have felt when writing those two words, if one of them means what it too often does; but I shall do my best to hope otherwise, unless your silence confirms the fear. In that case, do not think it necessary to speak. I know too well what it costs.

How often have I wished you were living near me! and and how I wish it more and more!—Your ever obliged and affectionate friend, LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 12th May, 1855.

MY DEAR DALBY,*—As to my friend of the *British Times*, I have been so used, in the course of my life, to be all sorts of things which I never was, that I am not at all astonished at finding myself a dead man. Many thanks for your zeal in the matter; but grateful as I am for it, I do not, you must know, care a penny for a thousand suppressions or mistakes of the kind, compared with one quiet enjoyment of what I write by a mind so genial and (let me solace myself by adding) so *con*genial as yours.

Let me not forget another pleasant addendum respecting myself; which is, that to the sore trial I spoke of, have been coming sympathies, and regrets, and amend-makings, and that all will surely come right somehow, not only here or hereafter, but hereafter, I trust, *and* here.

With kindest love to your fireside, I am, dear Dalby, your affectionate friend, LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 3rd October, 1855.

MY DEAR DALBY,—During our conversation the other evening, the name of "Henry Leigh Hunt" was mentioned

* The editor of a country paper, with whom Mr. Dalby was acquainted, had quoted from the *Seer*, and, in doing so, described the author as "the late Leigh Hunt, a contributor to a fugitive publication;" on which Mr. Dalby writes to explain. He admits that Addison and Steele might have been described as "contributors to a fugitive publication;" but, he says, that he has insisted upon resuscitating the living man.

as that of the person lately dead. He was not the only person, however, who bore those three out of my four names; nor, indeed, has the other name always been wanting. Will you, therefore, have the kindness to mention anything you may have heard in connection with bearers of those names, my supposed self, of course, included. Anything, whether said or done. *No matter what it may be.* For it is not the pain given, however bad, but the worse pain to be saved, even to the culpable themselves, that is now the great point.

I forgot the other evening to mention that the name of the person really intended by all that was offensive in the character we talked of, *was disclosed to me*, and this, too, with no intimation of its being disclosed in confidence. I would tell it you, had I told it to anybody; but I have not done so, and never mean to do it; for though the person is dead, he has connections living (which, perhaps, the writer was not aware of); and should they come to hear the name, it might cause them great suffering. Not that *you* would disclose such a thing, if told under injunctions of secresy; but confidence given to one friend, might be justly claimable by more; and you will see the propriety of the determination.

So do not think it necessary, I beg, if you are busy, to write me a word more than you can help; or indeed, only such a word more as will tell me how you *get on* with your leg; I trust the way the most suitable to the involuntary appropriateness of that phrase.—Your affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

In forwarding the subjoined letters for publication, Mr. Bell has supplied the following memorandum explaining the circumstances under which they were written.

["About June, 1853, I commenced my preliminary labours upon the *Annotated Edition of the English Poets*, and he was one of the first persons to whom I communicated my design. He entered into it with the warmest interest, and offered to

render me any help which his almost boundless stores of knowledge in reference to our poetical history placed at his command. Unfortunately, as I advanced in my work, my time became so entirely absorbed by it as to deprive me of the opportunities I had anxiously looked forward to of benefiting by his counsel. It was only while the project was in its preliminary stage, while we were forming plans, and shaping out a scheme sufficiently comprehensive to embrace the whole body of our poets, either in full, or by specimens, or criticisms, that I was able to visit him at intervals. Whenever these fortunate opportunities occurred, our discursive gossips carried us into subjects upon which nobody was so well qualified to speak out of a rich and tenacious memory as himself. He had gone to live a long way off, near Hammersmith Broadway, and as his health rarely permitted him to come to town, our meetings always took place at his house. The time arranged was eight o'clock in the evening, which was his hour for a friendly compromise between tea and supper, or, rather, a union of both, 'the cup that cheers but not inebriates' being always accompanied by some light and delicate fare, such as lamb cotelette and salad. It will be seen from his notes how eager he was for the arrival of the appointed evenings. On these occasions we discussed all sorts of questions concerning the poets and their biographies, and the out-of-the-way sources of information from which stray rays of light might be obtained upon particular points. The poets who are little known, came in for a larger share of consideration than the most famous, from a desire to seize the opportunity of doing justice to them, and of enlarging the domain of pleasure to the reading world. I remember that he was especially pleased at my revival of Oldham, the Protestant Dryden of the Restoration, which he thought a good service to literature; and that he anticipated with no less satisfaction, certain parts of the scheme relating to the English Satirists, and the Pastoral Poets, which I have not yet been able to accomplish. The notion of collecting into a single volume the best songs of our

dramatists struck him as a happy one, and he devoured the book with avidity. But he could not forgive the omission of his and my favourite O'Keefe, until he found that the work did not come down late enough to include that pleasantest of all lyrical humorists.

I look back with the deepest regret upon the rareness of our delightful Hammersmith meetings. The few evenings we accomplished in this way, were devoted chiefly to what he calls 'prolegomena;' and they were filled brim-full with mingled lore of anecdote and criticism, felicitous illustration and wide reading, ranging over an infinite variety of topics, which he used to pour out with a vivacity and youthfulness of spirit that remained bright in him to the last."]

To Robert Bell.

Hammersmith, 18th June [1853].

My dear Bell,—I should have been most happy to send you the Dryden; but, unfortunately, when I moved into my present minim of an abode, which would not hold half my books, I parted with it to Mr. Miller, of Chandos Street. This, however, was such a short while ago, that most probably it is still on his shelves, and no doubt he would lend it to you. As to any other help which I can give to your undertaking (and I was glad to see it in such large and loving hands), it is of course at your service, not only for the sake of the thing itself, but as a debt to the attentions which you have ever so kindly shown to my own pen. Sorrow and sickness have been busy with that remnant of me which you saw last; but the old pulse is still beating within me, and the comfort from the old books, &c.; and most pleased I shall be to talk with you about them, and furnish you with any notes, recollections, &c., which you may think worth your acceptance. Also, I will come as soon as possible to see you; but as my health does not yet allow me to reckon confidently upon fixed days, perhaps you will come meantime to me. All or any of my

evenings are at your service, from five o'clock, except Wednesdays, which an old friend generally comes to pass with me;* and as Mrs. Hunt is confined with rheumatism to her chamber, I am always to be found alone, and visitors do me great good, especially such visitors; so you see my assent is anything but disinterested. I have just finally sent to press a book which has anxiously occupied me, and have now returned to a sort of history which I had begun—of Kensington—for *Household Words*. Come, and help to give me spirits for it.—Ever sincerely yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 27th September [1853].

MY DEAR BELL,—This is the only time the sight of your handwriting was unwelcome to me; for I have been going, these several days, to write to you myself, on the same ground of self-reproach; and so I have lost the grace of the first movement. However, you have gained it. I had begun to fear, from your long silence, that I ought to have acknowledged the receipt of the letter which told me of your kindly journey to Oxford Street: and yet I said to myself,—No! it is surely not so. But, looking for you, as I did, day by day, and being afraid to trust myself on the theological part of your letter, for fear I should not be able to explain myself under three or four sheets of paper, I waited in the first instance till I should see you, and then went hoping and delaying on, as I hope you yourself may have done sometimes in some such case. At last I said, I *must* really write to Bell, and ask him what has become of "Bell, book and candle;" that is to say, not of the old curse so worded, but of the new blessing of my solitary doors, under which Bell came and talked with me of his books and poets, over our tea by candle-light.

Pray come as soon as you can, and on any evening you like,—Wednesday, you know, excepted; though my friend

* The old friend alluded to was Mr. Ollier.

Ollier, who has grateful recollections of your review of his *Ferrars*, would be most happy to meet you, and to join in the talk upon the books he loves: but this you can do, and I hope will do, some Wednesday, after our business part of the work is over. So name the first evening you can after to-morrow, or don't name it if you are busy, but come,—Thursday Friday, or Saturday,—for you are sure to find me at home; and we will be swift and strong with the "List," and do a world of pleasant prolegomena.

I rejoice in what you say about my elderly juvenilities, but grow suddenly grave about the "book;" * for the gravest portion of all my life and heart is in it, and conscience made me write it, and I hope and believe it will do good to those who are in want of such a book, as I was myself, and nobody would write one for me; but I often fear that many good people will be startled by it, and think ill of me; and this makes me sad, till the sense of having done my duty revives me. So talk as little as you choose, one way or other, about the book; but come, at all events, and let us have a refreshing plunge into dear, foolish old Anderson, or Chalmers; and believe me ever, my dear Bell, most sincerely yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 1st November [1854].

MY DEAR BELL,—Don't be frightened at this letter. There is no necessity for your writing a word in answer; and you will oblige me by not doing so, if you can help it; for you must be hard worked indeed. But Parker did not send me Oldham (a great desideratum), and now, as I don't know whether he will send Waller, I write to ask whether I may send *for* them; *i. e.* to Parker's by a messenger; which I can always do with perfect convenience. I shall know whether I may do this, if Mrs. Bell will just write the word "yes" on a piece of paper, and if she will put the said piece of paper in a

* The volume of *Prayers and Meditations*, which had been lent to Mr. Bell in sheets, for his perusal.

copy of *Chaucer Modernized*, and send me the book by the Parcels Delivery Company: that is to say, if you have it, and can (just now) lend it me; for I am collecting all my *Stories in Verse*, and wish to add to them those which I ventured to modernize from the great poet. And *my* copy has disappeared.

I write as little as I can to you, in order to save your time; and am ever, dear Bell, affectionately yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

I have scarcely been able to give even a glance yet to the Cowper; but shall read every bit, by-and-by, of everything. The Lyrical volume was most welcome; but why did you leave out O'Keefe? especially after rejoicing, as you justly did, in his appearance in *Wit and Humour*. But don't answer this question till I see you.

To JOHN HUNTER.

Hammersmith, 19th May.

MY DEAR HUNTER,—Accept my warmest thanks for your two letters. The first set me upon making anxious inquiries of the carrier, and they were to be finally settled this morning; and now they are so, and in the best manner. I rejoice to find, under your own hand and seal, and in so many unequivocal and cordial words, that you have been pleased with my inscription of *Godiva;* for whether it is that misfortune has subjected me to sorry misgivings, or that I am a modester man than people, I am afraid, have supposed me, and therefore apt to think that a good word from my pen may not be considered so acceptable as I could wish, certain it is, that in spite of a balance on the side of non-doubting, a little lingering doubt did remain in my mind on that point, which is the reason why I left out the words "of Edinburgh," in order to leave you a chance of escape among the unappropriated "John Hunters" of other localities. And now I wish, not only that I could have let the words stand, but that I could have specified you more distinctly (if that were

necessary), or that I could have designated you of Craigcrook (could that have been proper). By the way, if Jeffrey had not left a charm upon that name, which doubtless has not decreased among the friends who knew you both, I could have wished to be allowed to think it a vile name—I mean in point of sound—and would fain have had it changed to some other more euphonious, for why should harmonious souls inhabit cacophonies? Some better word might surely have been found among all the pretty Scottish toponymics. I would even have rather had it Italianized (*inter amicos*) into Pietracorva, or some such name, especially as he was said to have had something of the Ariosto genius in him, and you, too, are a lover of Italian verse. Lord Woodhouselee and other "good judges," I think, would have approved the change. By-the-by, what a pretty name was *that*.

But I am wandering from my dear John Hunter's approvals of his friend Leigh Hunt, for which I thank him over and over again. I always, you must know, counted you an embodiment of all the kindly thoughts which Scotland could by any possibility entertain of my verses; and I have been grateful accordingly (however little I have been able to show it), and reckoned myself paid for my love of her poets and pleasant memories, which has ever been constant, even when not a little tried. But in some respects, you know, it has always appeared to me that Scotland, by some unaccountable freak of latitude—or was it in consequence of an infusion of the blood of France?—was a more southern region than England; I mean as to its songs, and dances, and other evidences of animal spirits, not omitting certain escapades of the wise over their bottles, called High Jinks; which were not dull, drunken frenzies like those of the Sedleys and Killigrews, but recognitions of the right meeting of extremes in the blood of the good and over-thoughtful. I allude to such as are described in *Guy Mannering*. Now *you* I always regarded as being at once a very good and a very southern Scotchman; and as nature always leaves a corner in the self-love of the well-intentioned, even when most unhappy or

misconceived, in which they may be enabled to reconcile themselves *to* themselves, and as I never could help thinking that the worth of the animal spirit portion of me had hardly justice done to it by my beloved but somewhat unsprightly-blooded countrymen (a few exceptions apart), it has been a constant comfort to me to feel, whenever I thought of you (which has been very often), that I possessed in Scotland a greater number of persons, but one person in particular and most emphatically, who sympathized with me thoroughly, both in my graver and lighter moods; and this is what made me address you as the friend *par excellence* of my verse upon the only occasion on which I ever ventured to introduce my name into metre. Judge therefore of the pleasure you have given me in thus finally warranting what I did.

I shall try hard, you may be sure, for the sake of this kind of identification of you with myself, to think as you do of passages out of the poems you speak of. I will look to the *Bacchus and Ariadne* with that view, should the volume of the Miscellanies appear to be called for, and will also consult the *Descent of Liberty*, which a neighbour of mine here possesses. *Ronald* I wished to complete on the present occasion, and should have done so if I had had time. I reckoned upon giving a different and truer turn to the story according to the real legend, but I should have left the exordium as it is (with the exception of one couplet), for I own to having a value for it. You may imagine how doubly welcome to me is your approval of *Godiva* itself, considering the inscription; but your memory has misled you with regard to the word "scorner." It means *rich* man, not *poor* man, as you will see upon turning to the original, if it happens to be with you. Oh, no! the poor man, generally speaking, has suffered too much, and therefore been forced to think too much, to be a scorner. I am very sensible of the value of Mr. Gerald Massey's approbation of the story, and beg you to present him with my respects. Whatsoever you wish to be done towards the compilation of the miscellaneous volume

shall be so, if it can be, especially if you will give me the benefit of your suggestions when its time arrives. Time is arriving with me now, I trust, for many things which I have long yearned for, sometimes despaired of, but, oh! how should enjoy! I deserve them, too, for I have had great sorrows, and met with amazing, but, thank God, regretted misjudgments. What a blessing that the persons to whom, from particular circumstances, my heart ever felt itself closest, never considered me unworthy of them! God bless you, my dear Hunter, prays ever your affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

You will receive before long (*viâ* Menzies) a sort of Anecdotical History of Kensington, and a selection from the plays of *Beaumont and Fletcher*. I am seeing them both through the press. Don't buy them, if you love me.

Hammersmith, 30th May, 1855.

MY DEAR HUNTER,—Thanks for your welcome enclosure, which is calculated to do my book a great deal of good. I do not plead guilty to the "slip-shod" style of prose; for I take a great deal of pains with it. (This pair of "great deals," for instance, would not have appeared so close on one another in anything which I wrote for the public; for one mustn't sit in one's gown and slippers out of doors, however unstudied may be one's dress otherwise.) I claim to know myself in this matter, because my painstaking is matter of fact; but in all other points my critic may know better than myself, and I shall consider well what the sincerity of so very kindly a man tells me. He is one, too, who can sympathize both with gravity and with gaiety, and this is a godsend to a mixed nature like mine. It comes also from Scotland, to make good what I was saying in my last letter, which is a very pleasant sequence of things indeed. Oh, I will pay her all before I have done; for in some important respects (to make an odd mixture of phrases) a blessed time is—I mustn't say *dawning*

upon me in my life's evening, but *setting* upon me; and I have nothing further to ask of Fortune or of any one else, than that they will wait "a little bit." And they do, without my asking. Such good ones are they; and as few, thank Heaven, as good. It is a comfort, beyond expression, to me to know that I never left an undischarged obligation, for any length of time, to anybody, who did not treat me during the interval as if I *had* discharged it, and who, I am sure, never breathed a syllable about me inconsistent with that kindness. How heavenly to me were the moments when such men were repaid: and how heavenly will the few that remain be, especially after the clouds and tempest that came in to delay my first deliverance from disappointment! But no more at present of that; and not a word on the subject from yourself, as you love me. I know everything which you would say, and I should take any actual "say" as your only unkind action.

I made a monstrous "forget" in my last letter; which was to say that I quite agreed with what you said about Dante, and the "bocca mi baciò." I agreed, indeed, when I altered the passage; for I only did it out of a notion that "propriety" might prefer my doing so; and I shall be most happy to restore him in another edition. Also, my friend in the *Edinburgh Guardian* makes me recollect that there were lines in Moxon's edition of the poem, which I would willingly restore too; and when another edition comes (should it come) I will ask your valuable aid in helping me to know what I should retain or what not from *any* of the editions; for in truth, what with my wishes to please the public and propriety, and *im*-propriety (so called), and truth itself, I have been for a long time fairly confused in my *Rimini*-scenery. Pardon this pun, and believe me ever, most heartily yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

P.S.—I am indebted, by the way, in a certain manner, to no Scotchman living but yourself. Nor to Jeffrey was I in

precisely the same manner, great as was his kindness. Oh! the *Guardian* critic pleased me very much by his particularization of the "Hunter of Craigcrook."

Hammersmith, 11th July, 1855.

I am going to fight manfully for *all* my wonted copies, hoping to send one of them to Weir, with whose verses you have so much gratified me, and whose name is ever dear to me, though fate, and a lonely suburban life, and most painful domestic circumstances when he was nearer to me in locality, hindered me from cultivating an intercourse, the hope of which when he came to settle in London was far more valued by me than he would have suspected. And perhaps circumstances of some kind or other hindered him from encouraging me to set aside my own incompetences of hospitality, and endeavour to draw our connection closer. It was the same with me, for years together, in regard to our mutual friend Craik, for whom I had the highest regard and esteem, and who poured forth the other day the whole loving-kindness of his heart in a criticism on my *Stories*, in the *Globe*, for which, in spite of modesty, my own heart could not but most gratefully thank him. I regretted, when I saw this last book of mine in print, that in handling the name of Vere (see vol. i., p. 275), which ought to be spelt Weir, and is in reality the same as that of our friend, unless the latter has the Scottish meaning of War, I did not add something in honour of the English word, which should have done it justice in spite of Andrew Marvell's pleasant banters, and the special purport of which would have been secretly understood by such friends of Weir as you and Craik. And I will do it, should the book reach another edition.

I rejoice in your liking of *Talari Innamorati*, for which you have revived a regard on my own side, and I will do just what you please with it. I can easily believe, for I have not seen it a long time, that it would be the better for a few more advanced-in-life touches. As to

"Craigcrook," I go heartily along with your vindication of it, with much penitence, and am ever, my dear Hunter, most affectionately yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 25th September, 1855.

I often think of you at Craigcrook, and wish I could be there, sitting with you on the grass, as you and yours contrived to do on one of my little bits of sward at Kensington; and I have a bit still less here at Hammersmith, on which we should all assuredly pack ourselves somehow or other, if you all come here (as I hope you may), were it only to help me to play at *lawn* a little, and pretend that I possess nineteen really available inches of grass. There is a trellis on two sides of it, to hide outhouses and neighbours' paling, so that it makes a sort of garden box *in* a garden box, and I sit out of doors in it on sunny west-wind days, and pretend to have arbour, grass-plot and all, and be remote, and horticultural, and impossible. Alas! to be in Craigcrook, I must have a wife healthy and unrheumatized, to be able to take care of herself in case of alarms, and fires, and other domesticities; and as this cannot be, neither can I be where otherwise I would. But wherever I am, dear John Hunter is with me somehow, distant as he may think himself.—His ever affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 6th December, 1855.

Would to Heaven I had had you by me when I made up the poetical works; for I had not the courage, even by the help of your *written* encouragement, to include the *Talari Innamorati*. I was afraid they would frighten the "legs" of some of the American young ladies; though, for that matter, the more I now read and hear of Young America, and of Old too, even in the Puritan portion of the States, the more I begin to

think they tend to outstrip me, rather than otherwise, in cosmopolitanism of all kinds.

Hammersmith, 18th December, 1855.

My dear Hunter,—I was very sorry to find that you had been in very "bed" with illness; for, though it is not always the worst kind of illness that goes to bed, but, on the contrary, a comfortable, cozy kind of luxurious momentary incompetence, that knows its salvation will surely come, through warmth, softness, and gruel, into the joyous regions of "well again," and hot-buttered toast, yet, with a man of your mental activity and official conscience, it may be a very different sort of thing, and wholly undesired. For my part, I am so accustomed to be in bad health *out* of bed, that the idea of being forced to continue in it for a day would make me worse; and I have never so continued since I took the cold in the loins that nearly killed me some dozen years ago; nor do I recollect being so before, since a terrible St. Anthony's fire which I had in my youth. Beatings of the heart drove me out of bed in those days, as restless nerves have done since; but, upon the whole, a constitutional necessity for temperance, and a capital *res angusta domi* just suiting it, have made me do very well, considering; and I often wonder to find myself alive, and writing, and ready to be brisk and responsive at a lively word from a friend, after an emotional, and, to say the truth, hardly tried life of seventy-two years.—But here have I been running on in comments upon my own ailments, by way of response to those of a friend; not unlike some persons whom you may have noted on such occasions, who indeed rather make no response at all to the friend but by some immediate and self-absorbing mention of an ailment of their own.

Hammersmith, 5th February, 1857.

. . . . The reason why you cannot fall in thoroughly with the new poets, is what you have said yourself about the "flowers," and because they unfortunately prefer saying fine

things to true ones.* Hence superfluities and incoherences which overload, disamalgamate, and will tumble them to pieces with the next ages, unless they take veritable thought, and do justice to the poetry that is really in them. Such was the fate of Henry More, with his *Song of the Soul*, and with the *Psyche* of Joseph Beaumont. You may judge what I felt about the war sonnets, when I opened the book on the one beginning—

"Blaze gun to gun," &c. &c.

with that affectation of encouraging "living mires," and "hells of fire," which is or ought to be revolting to a poet's heart, and is not at all his business: for to say it is necessary to oppose the "commonplaces of humanity" with such outrages upon them, is itself a commonplace, however it may seem otherwise to the unreflecting. Mankind are always too ready to continue the barbarism, war; and whatever may be the unavoidableness of it, or even the desirableness of it, at some particular moment, when forced upon us by barbarism itself, it is not the poet's business to lay down his harp of Orpheus, and halloo brutalities on.

And as to God's permission, and therefore use of such things, we might as well encourage, instead of piously helping to do away, any other evils through which, or in spite of which, good mysteriously progresses, and strike up howls in praise of murder in ordinary, and Bartholomew massacres. Such mistakes vex one in men of genius, who ought to know better.

My "meat-supper" was an exception to my ordinary suppers of so rare a kind, that I suppose I do not eat meat at night more than half a dozen times in as many years, and then it is

* Mr. Hunter had written to suggest for a contemplated volume of sonnets; with some doubt, however, of certain poems by young writers who had already acquired a popular name. "They are," he remarked, "almost all too warlike for you. . . . . I wonder if you feel at all as I do—a difficulty in sympathizing with these Young England poets of the present day?"

a very small one, and mostly caused by having had no meat in the day. I have had no such supper again, but still symptoms of giddiness occur, owing, I believe, to my having been confined of late with more than usual closeness to the house. I am going out, and more into the world, for many reasons. I send a copy of *Virgin and Son*, and now think strongly of inserting, so anticipating perhaps, your ever friendly approval. But I shall strengthen the lines here and there. The tears of Mrs. Dobell give me a respectful and grateful interest in her, and I beg you to tell her so. I do not wonder her poet felt her restoration as he did. But should not the name of her restorer be mentioned at the head of the sonnets? Ah me! how griefs and tendernesses are mixed up in this world; and how lovely and all-accounted for will things be in the next, if the griefs turn out to be grounds for perfecting and making blissful the tenderness!—as indeed I devoutly believe, with all but the certainty which, under that condition of the necessity, would not be good for us, or therefore possible. I spoke of a short letter, and here I have written you a long one; but the temptation to try to think of other things, and to think them with yourself, was irresistible, and it has succeeded. I call to mind, before I conclude, that I have a play coming out—*Lovers' Amazements*—which you may have seen in print in the few first numbers of an abortive attempt to revive the *London Journal*. How strange will the animal spirits of it sound to me on the stage! But should it succeed, a special blessing will come of it, in which I shall expect you, for my sake, to rejoice.—My dear, dear Hunter, I am ever most affectionately yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

Kensington, 9th October.

MY DEAR HUNTER,—I was turning the subject you gave me in my mind, and hoping every day to be able to send you the result in a week or so, when, by an extract in a country newspaper, I was reminded that it had been already handled by Tennyson, and handled so well that I did not choose to

take it up after him. Not so with the subject which you will find addressed to you in the accompanying verses. *That*, I conceive, with wonderful error for so true a poet, he mistook the spirit of, substituting, indeed, the gross letter instead, and parading the naked body. And as one mistake brings another, he violated even the most obvious probability and matter-of-fact, making poor Godiva absolutely come naked down the stairs of her own house, and sneak without any necessity from pillar to post in consequence; when it is clear that she would have done as any lady would do in like circumstances, or as she does when she goes to bathe—keep herself wrapped in something till the last moment. Pardon this most involuntary difference with a fine writer, and accept my little inscription. Receive also with forgiveness the long-promised, come at last, Velluti. I should have written it out with my own hand for you, but was so jaded and knocked up with a variety of matters, in spite of the refreshing evening which Mr. Dodds gave me last week, that I was forced to give up the intention. You are such a true lover of poetry, and of all which poetry loves,—are withal so severe a judge of your own verses (some of which are capital), that you would infallibly have made a poet, had not circumstances turned you into a laborious family man and flourishing lawyer. With kindest remembrances to Mrs. Hunter, I pray Heaven to keep you long and happy in this world, and to let me know you again in the next.—Your affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

To GEORGE L. CRAIK.

Hammersmith, 21st May, 1855.

MY DEAR CRAIK,—How shall I thank you for the effusion of loving-kindness with which you have honoured my book in the *Globe?* I do not pretend to be able to do it. Modesty must needs deny me the right of accepting it all without limitation; but I need not, and cannot, give up a particle of it as far as it is you who give it me, as far as the sincere and

warm-hearted man has been led by his zeal for my welfare, and perhaps his sympathy with my sorrows, to forget the critic in the friend. For I see and love the consolatory motive of some of your words. The thought of this notice will be treasured up among my abiding comforts.

Hunter—as if you two friends had been sympathetically acting on the same kindly impulses at the same moment—has written to me two most valued and affectionate letters. I fancy him in his nest there at Craigcrook, taking possession of a long ultraquinquagintal portion of human life, and making as much of every other little congenial pleasure that comes across him, as he does of my verses; of which (with leave of those minor objects called wife and family, and duty, and the good of his soul) he was certainly born to be the good-remembering and quoting genius (not without his generalizing twin in the *Globe*). But you know how long he has flattered and delighted me with that kind of memory.

You would not have had a copy of the book that has been cut open, could I have sent you another as quickly; but you will see by the paper covering that it has been kept in good condition.

With kindest, gravest, gladdest wishes to you and yours, I remain, dear Craik, your most obliged and affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 25th September [1855].

MY DEAR CRAIK,—Grieved have I been at not being able to send you the *Court Suburb*, at least not at present. It shall go hard if you do not have it by-and-by to add to such books of mine as are honoured by a place in your shelves. And the accompanying book reaches you very late. I have not had my usual quantities of books of late from any of the publishers. But at all events, these failures of mine Belfast-wards will show that when my volumes do reach you they have no eye to certain critical kindnesses. I only wish their

gratitude could be as quick in its manifestation as it is disinterestedly felt.

Do not think it necessary to write to me, especially if you are busy. I know what it is to have too much to do with a jaded head; and I also feel a sort of shame when anybody thanks me for what is imperfectly done. I know what you will think of these plums out of the puddings of Beaumont and Fletcher; am sure of the kindly reception you will give them; and if I have not the happiness of seeing you soon, shall be well content with a message at your leisure, telling me of their receipt through any channel with which you communicate of necessity with London. . . . . Ever affectionately yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

To Miss Craik.

Hammersmith, 20th August, 1857.

MY DEAR LITTLE FRIEND,—Not finding my little book to greet you on your arrival at home, and never having heard a word about it for so many days afterwards, Heaven only knows what you must have been thinking of me. Nevertheless, among your many wonders on the subject, I have certainly reckoned upon your friendship's thinking the best of me it could, and giving the casting vote in my favour.

Yet now hear the greatest wonder of all. For it was not forgetfulness (catch me at that who can!)—nor was it non-possession of the book, for I had it; nor was it delay in the dilatory sense of the word; no, not a bit; and much less (to use that very Irish phrase, the Irishism of which none of us ever seem to suspect; for how can there be anything less than other non-causes?) had it anything to do with Ireland, and the people there, or with Scotland, or with England itself, except this one little particular spot, No. 7, Cornwall Road, Hammersmith. And, to add wonder to wonder, I am not going to tell it either; at least, not for the present. So there is a riddle to puzzle and amuse you meantime.

"Oh, he has been ill," says Little Friend. No, I haven't. At least, not at first. "He has had some older friend to attend to," says ——, "under some very particular circumstances." Thank ye, madam; but it is not so, indeed. "Doesn't he deceive himself?" says the novelist; "and wasn't it delay, after all?" No, madam, it was not. The guess, I allow, is very acute, but it does not apply to me in the least. "He has been very busy," says the good father, "and didn't know which way to turn him." Not at all, I assure you, my dear Craik. So now I must leave you to your conjectures; for I have taken a small piece of paper to write this letter upon; and having intimated that I have latterly not been quite so well, I have just left myself room enough to say, that for these two or three days I have been startled with an occasional giddiness in the head, of which I had symptoms about a year ago. Do not have any fears for me, for I had it a great many years ago, when I was young; and I have resorted to the doctor, which you must know I very seldom do, and he is setting me right. It is accordingly in good spirits that I send you an antediluvian kiss, being ever your loving friend and patriarch,

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 22nd January, 1859.

MY DEAR LITTLE FRIEND,—I have been a very remiss correspondent, partly encouraged to be so by your own indulgence; but you must imagine me labouring incessantly under bronchitis, work, and all sorts of confusions, bad however excepted . . . . One of these confusions, nevertheless, was bad, inasmuch as it has delayed the number of the *Spectator*, which I post simultaneously with this letter, and address to your father. *This* week's *Spectator* also—or, rather, this Saturday's (but, indeed, it is the same thing)—will, I trust, be posted to him at the same time from the office; and that of the following week will come to him, because there will be more in it about Burns. The whole world *burns* with Burns at present, as it ought to do; for it

is a very pretty and genial conflagration; so your father, and you, and Georgiana, will see that I am burning also, and have recommenced my periodical days, having (perhaps, I should say alas!) no Gil Blas near me to remind me of my old ones, as Gil Blas did the Archbishop of Toledo. However, I did not find myself gouty in my *metrical* feet, while writing the new *Tullochgorum*. But that is a tune enough to inspire anybody.

Pray let me know in case your father does *not* possess a work of mine called the *Town;* for I have a copy, in that case, of a second edition, which he must accept. Also, what of Georgy's new novel? With Jacintha's love and my own, and constant thanks for kind remembrances, your ever affectionate patriarch,

LEIGH HUNT.

To EDMUND PEEL.

Hammersmith, June, 1856.

MY DEAR PEEL,—Your letters give me such a desire to chat with you, that to-day I am obliged to resort to this scrap of paper in self-defence, lest I should chat too long. Thanks for the walk which you have so good-naturedly taken me in the Pine-forest of Ravenna. I wish I could take a hundred with you, both in books and in Bonchurches.

I should be very glad indeed of the Judkin. I had seen the *Examiner*, cut the sonnets out of it, and was casting in my mind how I should get the rest. He has a strong sensuous faculty, which on these occasions acquires wings and graces from his animal spirits, his eye for the picturesque, and the harmonious control of verse; so that his sonnets, though bits of Canaanites, *i. e.* taking delight in the *borders*, become presentable to the public, and very deservedly so. Indeed the best of them have a character of their own;—I mean in point of ability as well as vivacity. So you have done the book as well as your brother sonneteers a service; at least I hope so; for you must know, it is to come out in America

under an American editor, though for my benefit, and it originated with himself; and out of the awkwardness of the sense of personal responsibility or delicacy in connexion with living writers, I have been obliged to restore to him the entire direction of the living portion of it, only furnishing him with more matter to choose from than he might have found in less book-stocked America. He adds sonnets from the American poets also; and from the interesting knowledge which he has given me of himself, appears to be a most excellent as well as poetry-loving man.—God bless you, dear Peel, prays ever your affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

P.S.—Besides the sonnets which I have copied from your own book, the book itself will go with the parcel to America. It was a second thought, generated by your kindness in sending me the duplicate; but it was due to you, in order that he might see if he had room for more.

Hammersmith, 2nd December, 1857.

MY DEAR PEEL,—I was very glad to have your letter of yesterday. When these horrors in India broke out, I asked —— in one of my letters to him (for I have seen him here but once since he has been married, and have been too unwell to go to him myself), whether all was well respecting you in that quarter; but he was in a hurry (I think) going into the country, and did not answer all my questions. So I still remained anxious about you, especially as his silence might be ominous; and I did not like to write direct to yourself, fearing I might touch on some new great wound. Your letter, however, speaks of nothing of the sort; *ergo* I am relieved, and write as I do.

To the book of sonnets, unluckily, a formidable and most unexpected obstacle presented itself; for the publisher, it seems, had stipulated for a *translation* of the Italian portion of them, and my friend had omitted to mention it; so when my box of books reached their destination, which for want of

specifying which Washington they were directed to, was not till after they had wandered to a couple of other Washingtons, (I thought there was but one Washington, like one London; and people say, there are *seventy!!*) *this* set of the proposed American publications from my pen could not come out till further arrangements had been made. . . . .

. . . . I need not add how heartily I sympathise with your own anxieties about your family. I should have said more about them had I not wished to explain about the sonnet book. Also your health, I feel not the less for that. Your grandchildren too interest me the more, because, with bad health myself, I too have a couple of grandchildren with me, who are very good children, and a great relief to my weariness. God continue such comforts to us, my dear Peel! God make us some day or other, in some blessed place, compare notes of past with the then present, and see how good it all was, and how necessary, for enhancing what we attain to.

When I have final news of the sonnet book, you shall have it too.—Ever affectionately yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

Please remember me to all, or any one who you think may care for the remembrance. I had the pleasure of a letter, some months back, from my dear old friend Sir John Swinburne, then in your island, and in his *ninety-sixth* year,—a right fine old English gentleman.

Hammersmith, 4th November, 1858.

MY DEAR PEEL,—After having taken the liberty of keeping your letter so long unanswered, I am afraid I shall only make matters worse by stating the best part of my excuse; for it must itself be a kind of effrontery; since I was led on to do it from day to day, chiefly out of my reliance on that very good-nature upon which I ought not to have so trespassed. However, you still see I cannot help reckoning upon it; so you find, what I have no doubt you have found on greater

occasions,—how unhandsomely you can be treated for being a right *Christian Christian*, and indulgent correspondent.

As for the rest, I am not wholly inexcusable; for I have had a severe illness since you heard from me last; was ordered into the country for change of air, which I could not get at the time; did get it late in the year; had work to do, on and off, in the meanwhile; and all this made me so languid and idle in the intervals — that *hinc illæ moræ*. I must add, however, that I had reason to be in constant expectation of such news from America, as would enable me to give you a satisfactory answer about the sonnet book; but none has come; and I have indeed suffered such a series of disappointments in regard to news from that quarter, that I begin to fear something distressing must have happened to my correspondent there, who is in very delicate health, and who, when I last heard from him, was in dread of a domestic calamity. I shall write again to him next week, requesting somebody to open the letter in his stead, in case he is not well enough to attend to it; and you shall hear the result as soon as it can be sent you.

One other feeling I had which helped to keep me delaying. I was very desirous of saying "yes" to the kind offer which you made me of sending me the autograph sonnet, written by one whose name I dare hardly yet put on paper; and that want of courage—or the want of courage in that direction—contributed to stay my hand from the pen. Very thankful, however, shall I be for it, painful as the first sight of the handwriting will be. I have some other MSS. of his, equally precious to me, and stored up where I seldom venture on a glimpse at them. Just after I wrote to you last, a serio-comic play of mine, written some years ago (see how strangely different topics come mixed together in this world), was unexpectedly brought out at one of the theatres, and met with a success almost as unlooked for, till the manager became as suddenly and unexpectedly a bankrupt, and his theatre and the play were thus stopped together. I am not without hopes, however, of seeing it appear in the course of the winter

at another. I trust also it will be published in a new English edition of my collected poems, as it has lately been in an American one; and if it be, a copy shall come to Bonchurch for your acceptance. White heard me read the first act of it once, in company with Forster, and gratified me extremely by being pleased with it. I remember telling him, that evening, of an old fairy tale, which he agreed with me in thinking would dramatize well; and with my leave, as he was good enough to say, he led us to hope that he would dramatize it accordingly. Will you tell him I have waited a long time in expectation of seeing the hope realized? and that if his ardour for the subject does not revive, I think I shall be tempted to do, in my old age, what I have sometimes wished in my younger; namely, as my brother senior, Sir Anthony Absolute says, "Marry the girl myself!" I fancy I see two acts of a very sprightly sort of little half-singing, half-dancing drama before me, whisking from court shows to country pleasures; and am, indeed, much disposed to make the experiment, in case the intention has been dropped on his part.

I wish I could talk with you longer upon points suggested by your letter; but burning cheeks warn me that I must leave off writing. I cannot conclude, however, without sending you my little grandchild's best thanks, for your remembrance of her, and wishing all sorts of welfare for yours: I have found, like yourself, that the older one grows, the fonder one grows of children. They help us to take an interest in little things and pleasant words, and to begin the day with something of their "sunshine of the breast."—Dear Peel, I am ever yours affectionately,

LEIGH HUNT.

P.S.—I am attempting some imitations of English poets, varied with a prose refutation of some criticisms of Cardinal Wiseman on Chaucer and Spenser.

Hammersmith, 26th November, 1858.

VERY DEAR PEEL,—Though you bid me not to write, I cannot but do so, to thank you for the precious enclosure of

the sonnet, which I do from the bottom of my heart, for your keeping it so safe, and with the tears still gushing from my eyes. I had not the courage to open the letter till this moment, guessing by the feel of the thickness what it contained; nor have I yet had courage to read any but your own words, for which also heartfelt thanks. How true is every one of them! save "remorse," for assuredly you ought not at all to feel that—you, whom we thought that *we* had not sufficiently attended to—for your kind invitation of him. Oh, heaven will piece all out.

What you are so good as to wish, shall most assuredly be done, when the sonnet is published.—Most affectionately yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

Dear Peel (to say nothing of their other graces), I love all the unconquerable charities in your book, also particularly the kind things you said to me on an occasion to which I hardly even yet dare allude, such pangs it still gives me from time to time every day, though it is now nearly four years since I lost him. Let nobody, therefore, wonder that I claim the right of inscribing myself, affectionately yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 30th December, 1858.

MY DEAR PEEL,—Not knowing Tennyson's address in your island, may I ask you to take the trouble of forwarding to him the accompanying packet? Finding, by your letter, that he lives at a place called Freshwater, I have endeavoured, in such "gazetteers" and other topographicalities as I possess, to learn where that place is, but in vain: so if the trouble involves expense, which is a part of the matter that belongs to myself, you will be kind enough not to deprive me of my right, but to let me know the disbursement. Perhaps there is a cross country road, and a messenger may be required. The packet consists of the new American edition of his poems,

including two letters to him, one from the giver of it, and the other from myself.

The new edition of my own poems (if I may speak of them at the same time) has made its appearance in the same quarter; but though I have seen it, I have heard nothing else yet respecting it, except that the American critics have given it hearty welcome. Neither have I heard another word respecting the sonnet book. I cannot but look for some very voluminous epistle before long.

You make me wish I could write you as "chatty" a letter as before, but I have work to finish for a periodical publication before the week is out, and must not dare to begin. Thanks for yours, which is full of matter, and for your Christmas good wishes, which I as heartily reciprocate. My skating days are over, but I fancy I still hear the robust tinkle (strangely meeting words!) going on all around me as late as twilight, till, when I took my skates off to go home, I fancied my feet almost gone with them, so light they felt, and myself too. I rejoice in the welfare of you and yours, and in the safety of your son, even though he has missed his share in the heroism which has gilded those infernal horrors.

(If you ever come into personal contact with Sir John Swinburne, I beg you to give him my loving respects. I say this instantly, in the middle of our skating, lest by any chance I should omit to say it. You know, I dare say, what it is, after writing a letter and thinking you have said all, and sending it off, to exclaim suddenly, "Good heavens! and after *all*, I have forgotten *that!*")

My twilight in the skating was your more poetical—

> "Crimson tide of dying daylight,
> Bathing the two-edged steel."

Your *Return*, in my mind, is the best of all your poems, its external nature is filled with so many heart-beating internalities of flesh and blood. One very beautiful phrase in it,—

idea I should say,—true in every respect to the feeling which in such instances combines this world with the next,—

"Each dear grave
Bosom'd in *heaven*—"

goes about with me now in my walks, with additional melancholy comfort; for you know what a loss I had five years ago, but have not, I see, yet learnt that which I sustained last winter, and which has made me feel that I now belong as much to another world as to this. It is the one which still borders these letters of mine with black, the loss of the partner of more than half a century of my existence, for I had been married nearly as long, and I knew her a good while before. God bless my dear Peel, and enable us all to meet somewhere hereafter, where all will be known and made heavenly. You see I could not help writing you a long letter at last.—Your affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

P.S.—On reflection, I recollect that modern postal arrangements require books to be sent, apart from letters; so Tennyson's book comes to you by itself, and the letters for him in the envelope with yours.

An acquaintance begun with the Lord Chief Baron, at first in a purely literary sense, was hastened to a somewhat greater intimacy by a trifling accident. If Sir Frederick Pollock receives a letter from any distinguished author, he usually fastens it into a published work from the same hand, and always does it, if it be a presentation letter accompanying the book. On one occasion, Sir Frederick lent Leigh Hunt a book with a letter pasted into it. At the Post Office the letter was taken out and forwarded separately, with a charge of sixpence for it. Leigh Hunt reported what had happened to the volume and the letter, and a correspond-

ence arose. The Post Office people insisted that they were right. As Sir Frederick said in a letter to his correspondent, "Under the interpretation given to the regulations at the Post Office, an autograph letter of King Charles bound up in a History of England, although no more a letter within the meaning of the warrant than the dead body of that monarch embalmed at Windsor is a man, would be liable to abstraction from the volume and surcharged." "The imperfection of language," observed Sir Frederick Pollock, "would continually give rise to error, if it were not balanced and corrected by the good sense of those who use it;"—an excellent remark for all who have to apply laws and regulations. The Postmaster General courteously proposed to alter the Minute; and eventually the rule of the Post Office, with regard to letters thus permanently inserted into printed books, and presentation copies, was altered. Meanwhile this co-operation in a public reform drew the two men together, and imparted a greater freedom to a very recently opened correspondence.

To the Lord Chief Baron.

Hammersmith, 7th April [1857].

Dear Sir Frederick Pollock,—I should have thanked you by return of post for the letter which you have been so good as to write me, but was prevented by incursions of visitors yesterday, and of a request respecting a candidateship of another sort this morning, which required attentions so immediate as to force me to delay gratitude itself. My evening to-day is again my own; and I hasten to express my sense of the honour and the pleasure conferred on me by the explanation into which you have taken so much trouble to enter, and by your most kind and valued expressions towards myself. I never see your name in a law report in the newspaper but, partly from the worth of what is uttered, and partly from the

recollection of that happy moment at Talfourd's, I read with special interest the words that follow from your lips. Judge, then, how much I must have been gratified at finding myself, in my turn, an object of so much kindly consideration.

I take shame to myself for not having called you to mind during the youthful time you speak of. I recollect well the future Lord Chancellor, with his prematurely advanced, judicious face, and his determination that his "impediment" should be no impediment at all. But I somehow could not "take" to him. Yours must have been a nature (some natures, though they may be modified, never alter) far more fitted to interest me, whatever of the future Judge may have been in it; and I wonder how you escaped the acquaintance of one who might have done no good to the more profitable portion of your time; and then what a loss might have ensued to the list of Barons, and what mischief to the family who have so much reason to be proud of you!

Pardon me for dilating this much on you, personally; but an author, you see, is not to be praised with impunity: a dictum which I take the further liberty of corroborating, by requesting your acceptance of the two volumes that are posted with the present letter. Fortunately, they are of too light a nature to be supposed capable of calling for any gravity of commendation; but a passage here and there may serve to amuse you or yours, at a moment of leisure; and you will seriously oblige me by considering their expectations in no other light.

Dear Sir Frederick, I live out of the highway of all sorts of things which other people know and ought to know, and am not sure that I even address you properly; but the good-natured man will overlook what might be owing to the Lord Chief Baron.—Your obliged and sincere humble servant,

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 25th June, Quarter to Four.

MY DEAR SIR FREDERICK,—If this letter should be as superfluous as my last, pray, assign it nevertheless to precisely the same cause; namely, a fear lest there should have been some

possible misgiving about me on your own part, and nothing in the world else. You will not wonder at my uneasiness under the impression.

Half-an-hour ago I was going down Cornwall Road to put some letters in the post, when a gentleman in black came obliquely across the road as if towards me, and he put his hand towards his hat, perhaps even raised it a little. I looked very hard, to see if I could determine that point by his manner in other respects, for I am very near-sighted; but not distinguishing his features, and finding he neither said anything, nor stopped, I walked on. I had hardly got into the high-road, when seeing a carriage which *did* stop, as if halting to wait for somebody, I said to myself, "Good Heavens! if that should have been Pollock!" (for in soliloquising, you know, one does not always give people their titles). What will he think of me? what can he possibly conceive?"

I wonder I did not instantly return, to see if Sir Frederick it was; but not finding him instantly return himself, and being about to do so on my own part the moment I had posted my letters, I said, "Oh! it is either some other person, and I mistook the thing altogether, or he has seen how it was, and gone on to the house, and will good-naturedly laugh at and pardon my dulness, and accept my excuses."

Meeting what appeared to me the same carriage as I was returning, but hoping from its slow movement that it was still waiting, and not daring to ascertain whether anybody was inside, I found, on getting in-doors, that one of my daughters had noticed a gentleman of similar appearance, who, after looking at the houses, had taken his way back, just as Sir Frederick *might* have done. Having better eyes than mine, she had also better discerned his dress, and compared notes with what she had heard me say of his countenance, and the conclusion she came to was, that it was Sir Frederick indeed —though finding my distress at fearing I had missed him, and above all, had appeared to treat his courtesy with such disrespect, she had determined not to say so, in the hope that I might still believe it to have been somebody else.

Now, if the good and honoured Judge it was *not*, here is a curious ground of perplexity to amuse him; if it *was*, he is hereby begged to accept the great regret, the mortified apologies, and heartfelt acknowledgments and respect of his purblind, half-witted, but most obliged and affectionate servant,

LEIGH HUNT.

P.S.—The letters were answers to some proposed visitors from America, which I could not in courtesy delay, otherwise they would not have helped to bring me into this misfortune.

To B. W. PROCTER.

Hammersmith, 10th October.

MY DEAR PROCTER,—I was extremely gratified with the sight of Mr. Hawthorne, his *Scarlet Letter* having given me a desire to know a man so full of thought, and feeling, and fine purpose. His few words do not hinder his countenance from being one of the most speaking I ever met with; and I flatter myself he will say more to me when I see him again.

The letter he brought me, too, gave great pleasure to your old and never-forgetting friend. I wish you would give me a *tête-à-tête* some evening before long in Weymouth Street, and then I will give you good reasons why you must indulge me with one in my loneliness at Hammersmith.—Ever truly yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 17th October.

MY DEAR PROCTER,—I thought to have written to you the moment you responded to my call; but was interrupted by some concerns of other persons, and could not well see my time before me. To guard, therefore, against intermediate chances, I name *Saturday* evening, and will come to tea at your own hour, if you will write me one more line, letting me know what hour it is. Only, as invalids get into habits

of dictation, and friends like those in Weymouth Street will indulge them, I beg to have all black tea, and no green; green being such a contradiction to its name, with me, as to put me in the ungreenest and blackest of all my conditions.—Most sincerely yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

7, Cornwall Road, Hammersmith,
19th December.

MY DEAR PROCTER,*—As you are not sure of returning on Friday, I find I can no longer delay indulging myself with directing a letter to you at your house with the addition of Mrs. Procter's name; for I cannot express the pleasure which the announcement of the Illumination has given me, and must needs thank your daughter for it as soon as I can. It is the more delightful to me, inasmuch as I have often wondered what the young ladies thought of the strange, battered-looking, wild-haired old cosmopolite, who came staring again into the world out of his hermitage; and whether they would talk to me, if I made bold to begin. And now I see that, on their father's and mother's account, and, perhaps, a bit on my own, as the author of those lines (indeed, I call to mind what Mrs. Procter has said, too, about readings of *Indicators*), they are most kindly disposed towards me, and I assure them I am very thankful indeed, particularly for this practical evidence of good-will. Hang it up in my room I most assuredly shall, and deliberately indulge myself, whenever I look at it, in the most pleasing paroxysms of vanity. Nay, I must not say so either; for I feel too serious in my very complacency to say so with justice, and bow, with too great a sense of better things, before the subject which I had the good fortune to write about. Times of life arrive at which it is as easy to charge one's self with vanities, as it is really difficult to sustain them. . . . .

* Acknowledging a copy of his own *Abou Ben Adhem*, in beautifully-illuminated characters, after the style of ancient manuscripts, by Miss Adelaide Procter.

I am always desiring to come and see you again; and, in order to show you how much the company is in my mind, and not the place, I will be with you again, I hope, before you come to me; that is to say, if you will let me know, by a line, when you have returned. If I am positively unable to come so soon, you shall then comfort me under the inability by coming to Hammersmith, where I shall, at all events, subsequently expect you some happy day before long. You will find me alone, as I almost always am; but there will be books about us, and old memories; and great will be the pleasure of your ever affectionate

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 28th May.

MY DEAR PROCTER,—The book which I thought to finish in a few weeks I am now only just finishing, after many months, though I have been (so to speak) constantly at work upon it, and yet it is upon no bigger-sounding theme than *Sonnets*. But I have been making a selection of them, English and Italian, and writing a long *historical* and critical essay—too long, I fear. But if you knew how many books I have been consulting and reading, and what preposterous pains I take to hunt out an item of consideration, which nobody else perhaps would think worth considering, you would not wonder.

I say all this partly to account for my not having yet been again in Weymouth Street, notwithstanding points that really drew me thither. But I have been nowhere. Literally so—scarcely out of doors at noon till lately, even for a walk. I was not out of the house all winter. The last visit I paid anywhere was to you—unless, perhaps, to Forster; but, at all events, the two visits were close together.

This letter, however, has a second and main object, which is to request you to let me see, if possible, *all* the sonnets you ever published, in order that my selection from them may be as good as I can make it, especially as my book compels me to be choice with the best. It is confined, at present, to those in Houseman's collection. Your latest

volume contains no sonnets, and borrowers, alas! have deprived me of former ones.

With kindest regards to Mrs. Procter, and constant gratitude to "A. P.," whose sunny colours greet my loneliness every morning, I am ever, dear Procter, affectionately yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 22nd June, 1857.

MY DEAR PROCTER,—The length of your letter from York was so far from rendering it the less welcome, that what with other correspondents, with visitors, and with debilitating effects of the weather (which, together with bronchitis, has begun to make my handwriting unsteady), I have been putting off my writing from day to day, in the hope of writing as long a one to show my gratitude. But though the bronchitis, which has pursued me farther this year into the summer-time, has for three or four years all but gone, my strength has become less promising than it was before you wrote, owing, I conceive, to the heat and the perturbed state of the elements, and if I do not write what I can to-day, perhaps I shall be less able to-morrow. So, first, let me thank you (but how shall I be able at any time to do that properly?) for the Illuminations; or rather your daughter, again and again, for *that*, and you (ditto) for the poetry. I can only tell you that it brought tears of thanks and tenderness into my eyes, and that the care bestowed upon the "gold and azure," as in the former instance, makes me steal a bit of your paternity towards the artist, and take a particular interest in her interesting face, and in all else that concerns her. This, too, I am sure, Mrs. Procter will allow to the grateful old man; and as to her own leave, you see I do not ask it. People cannot interest us, and then expect that we are not to be interested. I am saying all this to you, you must know, in the presence of both the ladies; for in my ignorance of your whereabouts, while you are thus from home, I have begged Mrs. Procter to convey to you what I write, and to read it accordingly as if it were spoken before

all concerned—*ergo*, to Adelaide as well. I say "Adelaide," because, in my right of the above little invisible bit of paternity, it will not be expected of me that I should confine myself to the more ceremonial designation.

But, after all, how am I to retain this glorification of me in my parlour, and not put it, with another less flattering looking-glass, in my bedroom? Justice to the illuminatress, &c., says nay to that; and yet, while proud of its being seen, I find myself making apologies for the pride; so that, between duty to others and modesty for myself, my magnanimity undergoes severe trials, and I know not what to conclude. Meantime, the object is very ornamental, and makes a charming double to its predecessor.—So I go on with my letter:

I rejoice that the evening was considered a pleasant one, and that you wish you had been with us. Very pleasant it was to me, both for what it brought me and the bringers; and speedy, I hope, will be another which is promised me, with additions; for I think it was arranged that Edith should come (*i.e.* of course, if she would), and it has been intimated to me, through my daughter Julia, from Weymouth-street, that Mr. Wilkie Collins might join them—a man whose books have long given me a wish to know him, for they are a veritable addition to the stock, and novels indeed; that is, things new, and, to use a hackneyed, but in his case truly appropriate phrase, of "startling interest," besides containing such attendant evidences of right feeling, and of pleasantry to boot, as renders the wish to know a man a personal wish.—I am writing these last sentences on

23rd June.

(I could not finish yesterday.) That York should appear to you "the most desolate city in England," surprised me. One fancies those famous cities to remain always what they were. I suppose the railways run away with the inhabitants to London and elsewhere. When I say "what they were," I mean in point of substance and occupancy: otherwise no old

city in the times in which we live, unless it be absolutely deserted (as I have seen a town on the coast of Italy), or grass-grown in some of its streets, like Verona, can affect us with a sense of former ages, as it does in books. What are all the houses in York to the houses of "York and Lancaster?" and did you ever think of York at all, old or new, when the "Duke of York" was commander-in-chief? How different he sounded from the Duke Richards and Edwards! I got a strong ancient sensation once out of Chester, with its walls, and its curious-lifted corridors and footways; yet, inasmuch as the waiters said "Yes, sir," and there was "Smith, grocer," over shop-doors, the living impression would not let the old one alone; no, not though I saw the river Dee, on which King Edgar was rowed by eight kinglets, and for two or three minutes the "wizard stream" looked verily enchanted, the day was so hot, and everything was so still and motionless. Death, however, making dreadful distances between past and present, I do not wonder that you felt as you did at suddenly meeting with Etty in the shape of a tomb-stone, but why should you end with calling what you say about it "gossiping nonsense?" I have observed more than once in you of late a tendency to undervalue what you say, and to call it "words," as if words were not often things also, and very precious, especially on the gravest occasions. I am afraid your very generosity has helped to mislead you in the matter, as well as your acquaintance with less generous men. But it becomes all who are sincere to stick by one another, whether able or not to prove their sincerity, at all times, to the incredulous. So, as a party greatly interested in the value of words (since I possess little else), I must beg you to turn aside from those gentlemen, and from your own experience of the law, and never to speak otherwise than becomes the man you are and a poet; for without "words," and the truth of things that is in them, what were we!

A pretty lecture! yet I think I am older enough, as well as poorer enough, to be allowed to give it. Adversity and bad health conspired to isolate me for so many years, not having a

crust, as it were, with which even to greet a friend, or a penny for coach-hire wherewith to seek him, that I began to be base enough to think my own best words of consequence to nobody even when about themselves. Great was my joy at finding the case otherwise; and this is another reason why I must not have words undervalued by those whom I have never ceased to think sincere, however their own depreciation of their words may have pretended to puzzle me. I have also another reason, which I particularly desire to whisper in your ear whenever I can speak apart with you *viva voce* for five minutes, and which it was of no use to tell before. And it is a very delightful reason too, at least to myself, and you will like it on that account. So come for the riddle as soon as you can.

I wish I could make it worth ——'s while to come and talk French with *me*, for though I can "read French" (as the advertisements say), I "cannot speak it." I would get on very quickly too, septuagenarian though I be; and then I should not be ashamed, as I was the other day, when Monckton Milnes introduced me to Mons. Merimée, "who spoke English." Yet I was glad of it too; and I bask in the brusque geniality of the said Monckton, who is a good fellow and large-brained withal. Item, his wife hath a smile as sweet as a sudden piece of good news.

I remember the battle of Hexham, principally Colman's, and the protector of the fugitive queen; and was hand-and-glove with them and their drums at the Haymarket theatre, as if the whole war of the Roses was taking place in a hot little private room. "Haltwhistle," too, I am not unacquainted with, by means of a good old gazetteer which I possess (Luckombe's), and which tells me, besides spelling it Halt*wesel* (which is as pleasant as the other name, but seemingly should be Wessel,—another town, within, I suppose, a halt's road of it), that it "enjoys (to wit in the year 1790) an infant manufactory of baize." I hope the young gentleman, by this time, has become the delight of all who know him. Chester le Street, or "Chester in the Street," that is

to say, on the straight or high road between Durham and Berwick (you see how learned I am in your localities, by means of Mr. Luckombe), was formerly a Roman camp. All Chesters, you know, are camps; *Castra*. In Northumberland I find a Chester in the Wall near Busy Gap. About fish in Hull (Marvel's place), I find this in Luckombe: "The first trade that enriched it was in Iceland fish, dried and hardened; the same that is called stock-fish, because it is carried on by a joint-stock." This etymology of the word stock-fish being new to me, I fancied might be so to others. At Newcastle-on-Tyne, I suppose you take your hat off to the shade of Akenside, a very stately gentleman, who delighted in a full-bottomed or full-powdered doctor's wig and sables, analogous to the dignity of his blank verse.

Going from "madhouse to madhouse" is indeed earning good payment hardly, especially for a poet; but then he is the man to do all the good possible to people so terribly out of the pale of commonplace, for he is used to those regions of imagination to which non-use or want of the complete round of brain has subjected them; and I have no doubt your pilgrimages have carried blessings with them. This must be, and of course is, your consolation. This year, I suspect, has been a particularly trying year to all delicate organizations, and you will probably find yourself younger again next. Meantime "St. Leon" or "the milk" won't do, will they? unless people could recover those whom they have lost, and by whom, during the fatigue of advanced life, they often feel willing to lie down "under the green turf," till the thought of survivors sets them again in motion. In one respect, besides the greater regard which I retain for "words," my sequestered unlegal, *i. e.* unlaw-mingled life (a terrible compound epithet that, I must own) has given me an advantage over you in keeping alive my tendency to see loveabilities in people, and thus to add to my stock of comforts; for I do not the less love old friends—quite the contrary—for when good-heartedness survives all trials and exacerbations, where can loveability be so well proved? Besides, I have grandchildren,

which is a help in this matter to which you have not attained; and two of them live in the house with me, and think I take as much interest in what they do as if I were no older; which is a wonderful flattery to the would-be inconvenience in the "old Adam," and tends to make him fancy that he has as much right to remain in the borders of their paradise as they have to be in it, if for no better reason than his wish to do so, and his sorrows.

But I am answering every point in your letter, with a vengeance! and have been cramming the previous page with small writing, out of a fear, that overtook me in the leaf before it, of my having no more room! whereas I am going to leave a couple of blank pages!! However, it will show you, my dear old friend, how glad I am to have a talk with you, and how it bears me on, in spite of all languid, and hot, and cephalic, and dyspeptic misgivings of ability. So come to see me as soon as you can, as be assured I will you; only, mind, that it must be under circumstances during which I can speak to you for a few minutes apart. It is nothing that can put you out in any way; only something which I must call to your mind. But I think I can take you better apart (if you do not come alone), from several persons than from one: so your family first, if you please, and Forster afterwards. Or I will first come to Weymouth Street if you prefer it, and then Forster can be met, and all, after which I shall propose to join you some evening in Montagu Square.

See, one of my two remaining pages is gone, after all; and I am writing haphazard by twilight. Twilight! past *nine*. Ever truly yours (I would say "affectionately" if you didn't dash somehow my young septuagenarian blood, notwithstanding your verses),

LEIGH HUNT.

[A good enough signature that. Dinner and tea brought back strength to my fingers, June 24.]

Hammersmith, 20th July.

My dear Procter,—Your beautiful letter makes me wish to say many things to you; especially as I have to excuse myself to your fine nature (for not being able to accept its conclusions), and to hope you will not think the worse of me for so doing—that I dare not at this moment attempt them in *writing*. When I talk to you, which I shall be able to do with less emotion, I think I shall get you to agree with me. Not for your own sake—oh, no!—but for mine. Be kind enough, therefore, to come and take tea with me here some evening, at your convenience—not hurrying, but not greatly delaying; and in the course of an hour of talk I shall easily and tranquilly tell you many things which it would take me a pamphlet to put upon paper, besides taxing my head like a burning-glass in the consideration and concentration of them.

You will not fall into the commonplace error of supposing that it is gratitude of which I wish to get rid—I could not if I would; nor could I desire to do so towards one like yourself. It is, thank God, too great a pleasure to me. The matter lies altogether in another region.—Ever most truly yours,

Leigh Hunt.

On Wednesday and Thursday evenings, by a rare chance, I have a succession of visitors; but I have no reason to believe that such will be the case for many, or rather any, evenings afterwards, with the exception of a gentleman whom I expect from America. A word from yourself, however, beforehand, would at any time secure us an evening to ourselves—not to be occupied, of course, by that one subject. I want you to tell me more of your last journey, and of previous ones. Peregrinations from locality to locality interest me extremely, though I can never take them. I do not, however, despair of yet being able to do so.

Hammersmith, 24th February, 1858.

My dear Procter,—Pardon this apparently thankless delay in acknowledging the receipt of your most welcome letter. I have long ceased to be in arrears with correspondents in general, such correspondents as yourself in particular; but I have fairly kept a whole batch of them waiting this time, owing to my having been running a race with time for a magazine; and time, after all, has distanced me, and I must begin running now in another direction; but I have determined to devote a day first to my friends, and you are the first among them.

The crown of crowns is the approbation of friends, and I confess I should have missed a congratulation, on the success of my little play, from Weymouth Street. You would have had a copy of it at once; but owing to a change or two (agreed upon with the manager) which I am making in the disposition of the scenes, and to the modifications in the dialogue requisite thereon, the play is not yet published, nor will be till he goes his circuit with it, when he will carry the new points with him, reproducing them afterwards at the Lyceum on his return. I did not like meantime to put forth a printed copy, in any way different from the stage performance. The changes are slight, but good for completing the stage-working. The press, like the audience, have been universally most friendly; and it was indeed a precious moment to me, when, being called for on the first night, I felt myself, as it were, in the arms of my fellow-creatures, with none of their old cordiality towards me diminished. For the sense of my really deserving this, in consideration of what I had risked, and suffered, and innovated for their sakes, was my greatest personal payment for all; and to find that time and circumstance had not lost it me, was comfort indeed.

They even received heartily the new bit of innovation which lies at the heart of the plot, and which tends, as usual, to a more liberal treatment of womankind.

Groan for groan, alas! we have been echoing with one another, in the bronchitis direction. The night air seized me

by the throat on coming out of the theatre: I could hardly speak, for a few minutes; and have not been out of the house since, night or day. March is now at hand; so let us think of daffodils and better weather. I long to come to you, be assured, and hope to be lodging before long in town itself. Returns are not so great as reputations, at the Lyceum. I have received altogether, hitherto, just forty pounds,—but driblets are to bring me more; and I am to have thirty pounds from the *American* publishers by some coming vessel. Think of that! You will see by this, that I was aware of the poem's being out at Boston, and that the introductory prose matter, written expressly for the edition by my American friend and myself, has not wholly been without profit. I hear also that the *Sonnet Book* is to come out in the spring, and *Prose Works* will follow in the winter. So your old friend is looking up in two hemispheres at once! And there was an announcement here, a little over-sanguine; but I hope *only* a little so.

Ever affectionately yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, Thursday Evening, 13th May.

MY DEAR PROCTER,—I must beg you very earnestly to be very kind to me, and dig into all possible corners of your memory and your memorandum-books for that bit of recollection I spoke of. If all men were like you, I would not care; but you know they are not, and, therefore, will know the good it will do me. I, alas!—and bitterly through life I have regretted it—kept then or afterwards no such books; but you being the wiser, and better man for others, of course did; so pray help me, by howsoever rough a guess, should the books of that day have been since done with; for I shall then not be afraid of erring violently with the guess of my own, which make I must should yours persist in failing me. Nobody knows better than you that there are graces beyond ordinary graces; and, therefore, I expect of you this most crowning kindness. The opportunity has come that I hoped, in the shape of an arrangement with publisher for copyrights;

and the *joy* of concluding it after a time of inexpressible fear of the contrary, fairly gave me a bit of illness, which is the cause of this my bad writing; but the worst of it is over; and do you only do what I ask, and you will help to set up my sthenography again in its very best condition. My P's and Q's, I find, fluctuate with emotions in my seventy-fourth year; for ill as I have been, I have written much better than this when worse.—Your ever obliged and affectionate

LEIGH HUNT.

Woodland's Farm, Putney, 16th September, 1858.

MY DEAR PROCTER,—Your welcome letter has just been sent me from Hammersmith, and explained yesterday's anonymous beneficence of the partridges. They have just come in time to enrich the piece of mutton which our old friend Ollier is to take with me here to-morrow; and we shall drink your health for them (and for your other good works) in a glass of veritable home-brewed country ale; for I am here, with my daughters and two grandchildren, at a right earnest farm-house (albeit is somewhat cottage-ornéed in front) to *play* at a little change of air. I fear it is no better, though the play itself has, I think, somewhat profited me; and I hope soon to get a little way farther from the pursuit of London smoke. We have real open fields, however, to look upon, with trees, cattle, &c., and the higher ground of Wimbledon close by. I wish one of your "goings in and out" of town would enable you to give us a look in. We could give you a chop any day, without previous notice from you, at two o'clock; and tea or coffee at any time else. But I am prepared for your not being master of your time; so do not fear that I shall take inability for disinclination.

I was the more glad to hear from you, inasmuch as I wished you to see the following passage from a letter written me by my friend, John Hunter, of Edinburgh, or, rather, now of Craigcrook, near ditto; a place of which he succeeded to the possession on the death of his friend Lord

Jeffrey. I had had a fight with him, of a nature which you may guess, when I add, that I told him he was the only *other* man living whom I could have allowed to be my conqueror in such a dispute,—yourself being the one preceding him. The grounds of the contest with you were far greater; but still the spirit of the thing was the same: so much so, that I took the liberty with you of telling your name.

The passage is as follows:—"What you say of Procter (whom I like best to call Barry Cornwall as I do), has refreshed, but not at all surprised me. I could have counted on his sympathy with myself (all unconscious as I believe him to be of my existence) on such a subject, for I have been a reader and lover of his poetry ever since the charming *Dramatic Scenes* were first launched into the light, and have them constantly beside me. *The Falcon* and *The Vision* (the latter an especial favourite) I read the other day for the fiftieth time, and found they had lost none of their relish. The last edition of his admirable *Songs* shows that what you said of a much inferior poet is emphatically true of him, that—

> 'His laurel tree shows
> Thicker leaves, and more sunny, the older it grows.'

Would that he would only let us see the new growths a little oftener than he does! In addition to these links of sympathy, has he not also been a lawyer and conveyancer, for some thirty years, like myself? Yea, have I not sat at his table, and talked with him of 'Hunt, Hazlitt, and Lamb?' He would say, 'No,' perhaps; for it is about as impossible that he should recollect, as that I should forget, that so long ago as in the year 1834, I had the honour of breakfasting with him, along with my beloved friend the late Thomas Pringle. It was at Basil Montagu's house, in Bedford Square, I think. That was, indeed, a red-letter day in my calendar; for I spent three or four hours of its afternoon with Charles Lamb and his sister at Edmonton."

Such are John Hunter's words; and from a man of his

fine brain, as well as warm heart, you have every right, my dear Procter, to do what I feel you must do; to wit, to enjoy them.

I am certainly getting "old," as you say; for, well as I recollect Keats, I have no remembrance whatsoever of his cousin. And the process of "going upstairs" is not alluring, though I endeavour to reassure my legs by finding so many younger people who dislike it Dear Procter, I am ever affectionately yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

Woodland's Farm, Putney, 27th September.

DEAR PROCTER,*—The wine at Hammersmith and Putney is not of the right sort. Send me a couple of dozen of port to Woodland's Farm as early as convenient. *I am sure you will be pleased with this note.*—Your old friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

P.S.—You see I have obeyed your inspiration to the letter. It is identical throughout, with the exception of the line drawn underneath the concluding sentence; which line I have added to show how emphatically true I take the sentence to be.

Strange to say, on the day on which you wrote that letter, and while the letter itself must have been upon the road, I said to my daughter Jacintha, "I feel an extreme desire to-

* Mr. Procter had written, on the 24th of September: "I have a great notion that you require some *good wine* to enable you to climb effectually that Æsculapian hill which (I hope) you are now ascending. Tell me if it be so. And remember that I have some *good wine* in my cellar, and that you would be pleasing me more than I can express, if you were to write to me thus:—'Dear Procter, the wine at Hammersmith and Putney is not of the right sort. Send me a couple of dozen of [port or sherry] to —— as early as convenient. I am sure you will be pleased with this note.—Your old friend,

LEIGH HUNT.'"

day for a glass of good port; the more, I suppose, because it is impossible to get it."

In truth, the medicine has been often advised me; but I tried it once, some years ago, and it failed; and for this, among other reasons, I have kept putting it off; but Procter's wish and the port together, aided by that impulse above-mentioned, are not to be resisted; and, at all events, I shall now give the medicine a good, long, fair trial.

Veritably welcome, then, dear Procter, is such a present to me now, and from you I can blush not to receive it; and I mean to be very shabby with it, or rather duly grateful, and keep it almost entirely to myself; only you must come, and warrant me in playing the host while I am broaching it; to which end you must dine with me on your return from Richmond, at any hour you please. Don't start at the word "dine," for I will give you nothing but as delicate a piece of mutton as I can procure; and as light a pudding, with coffee and tea afterwards (not suburb coffee and tea, but London); and there are omnibuses from Putney to London up to ten o'clock, and trains till a quarter to eleven.

Woodland's Farm, alas! is written, as you see, in the genitive case singular, not *Woodlands*, plural; being, in fact, a farm belonging to a Mr. Woodland. However, it is really a pretty place, far from wanting in wood, and giving rise to pleasant exclamations when people first behold it. It is not more than five minutes' walk from Putney-bridge. You take the first turning from the bridge on your *left* hand, into a road called Wandsworth Lane; and on passing the last house in this road on its *left* side, preceding the gap between Wandsworth and Putney, you come to a lane or little narrow road, turning into fields. This lane brings you quickly to a gate; and on reaching the gate, which you go through, you see obliquely before you on the right hand, and in front of a screen of trees, Woodland's Farm. Stretch a point for me, my dear friend, on that Richmond day of yours, and give some happy hours to your "old friend,"

LEIGH HUNT.

Cornwall Road, Hammersmith, 19th October [1858].

My dear Procter,—Though it is not to be supposed you could think of visiting the "*Woodlands*" during such weather as this, unless forced by some call of duty, yet it is right I should tell you of my return to this place yesterday evening. Also, it is more right I should tell you that I am the better even for this little change of air (a thing I have not tasted for many years), especially as the betterment is pronounced by my friends to have visibly increased after the arrival of a certain admirable medicine. The wine, indeed, I am told, is truly fine; and I am sure it tastes so, as far as my old and never very sensitive palate can judge; albeit I must add that, like other medicines, I take it to be only good for me as a help towards a change, and not as a thing to abide by. You will not think me ungrateful for saying this, for I am truly otherwise; and no little, I verily believe, is the good you have done to the stomach as well as the heart of your plucking-up old friend,

Leigh Hunt.

To-day I enter on my seventy-fifth year.

Hammersmith, 8th December [1858].

My dear Procter,—On looking over these verses after I have written them, I fear the writing does not look as careful as it should; and I would have done them again, but was afraid they could be written, for some reason or other, on no paper but that which you sent me. If I am mistaken on that point, and you have time, and the matter is otherwise of any consequence, pray let me know; for I will write as many copies as you please.

There is no doubt, either that your wine did my granddaughter good, or that she was in a strange bad way, owing to something which the doctor could not account for,—with swollen and blue-blackened, bruised-looking lips. The *vinosity* seemed to give her just what she wanted; and your name is bright in Bedford Street.

As to myself, I am wonderfully well, considering the weather, and my late bronchitis, and that I have not crossed the threshold since I left Putney (for fear of the cold); and that I am attacking Cardinal Wiseman (for *Fraser*, if *Fraser* will have the article) for his accusing Chaucer and Spenser of "never giving a rich description of nature, unconnected with wantonness, voluptuousness, and debauchery"! !! Most foul and false accusation. . . . . I dislike, however, attacking anybody, damnatory libellers not excepted; but as a Chaucer-and-Spenser-ophilist, how can I help it? Besides, I shall endeavour to give him his due, *pro* as well as *contra*. Your loving friend (for you must indulge my tropical style),

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 24th July.

MY DEAR PROCTER,*—Read the enclosed from my friend John Hunter of Craigcrook, and give me, if you can, a favourable answer. My bed-room is yours, for hand and face washing this hot weather, and you need stay, you know, no longer than is convenient to you;—but I hope Fortune will be kind to us. If you can come, please name your own evening out of the three which he gives to choose from; and do come if you can, prays your loving friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

FROM MR. AND MRS. BROWNING.

Bagni di Lucca, 6th October, 1857.

DEAR LEIGH HUNT,—(It is hard to write, but you bade me do so; yet I had better say "Master Hunt," as they used to call Webster or Ford.) A nine months' silence after such

* "This," writes Mr. Procter, "is the last letter I have ever received from him, I think." Mr. Hunter had expressed a wish to meet Mr. Procter.

a letter as yours seems too strange even to you perhaps. So understand that you gave us more delight at once than we could bear, that was the beginning of the waiting to recover spirit and try and do one's feeling a little less injustice. But soon followed unexpected sorrows to us and to you, and the expression of even gratitude grew hard again. Certainly all this while your letter has been laid before our very eyes, and we have waited for a brighter day than ever came till we left Florence two months ago and more, then we brought it to "answer" among the chestnut trees; but immediately on our arrival a friend was attacked by fever, and we were kept in anxiety about him for six weeks. At last he recovered sufficiently to leave for Florence, and (just think) our little boy became ill, for the first time in his life, and gave us solicitude enough for a fortnight: it is nothing now that it is over; he is going about now almost as well as before, and we go away to-morrow, as I said. But I will try and get one, at least, of the joys I came to find here, and really write to you from this place, as I meant to do. "*I*"—you know it is my wife that I write for, though you entangle and distract either of us by the reverberations (so to speak) of pleasures over and above the pleasure you give us. I intend to say, that you praise that poem, and mix it up with praise of her very self, and then give it to me directly, and then give it to *her* with the pride you have just given me, and then it somehow comes back to me increased so far, till the effect is just as you probably intended. I wish my wife may know you more: I wish you may see and know her more, but you cannot live by her eleven years, as I have done—or, yes, what cannot you do, being the man, the poet you are? This last word, I dare think, I have a right to say; I *have* always venerated you as a poet; I believe your poetry to be sure of its eventual reward; other people, not unlikely, may feel like me, that there has been no need of getting into feverish haste to cry out on what is; yet you, who wrote it, can leave it and look at other poetry, and speak so of it: how well of you!

I am still too near the production of *Aurora Leigh* to be quite able to see it all; my wife used to write it, and lay it down to hear our child spell, or when a visitor came,—it was thrust under the cushion then. At Paris, a year ago last March, she gave me the first six books to read, I having never seen a line before. She then wrote the rest, and transcribed them in London, where I read them also. I wish, in one sense, that I had written and she had read it. . . . . I shall commend myself to you by telling you this. Indeed, the proper acknowledgment of your letter seems to be that one should do something, not say something. If you were here, I might quite naturally begin repeating *Giaffar* or *Solomon*, and the rest. You would see whether I was not capable of getting all the good out of your praise.

While I write, there is a strange thing that happened last night impossible to get out of my thoughts. It may give you pain to tell you of it, yet if with the pain come triumphant memories and hopes, as I expect there will, you may choose the pain with them. What decides me to tell it is that I heard you years ago allude to the destruction of a volume of *Lamia, Isabella*, &c., *to be restored to you yet*—now you remember; also, I think, of your putting my name near Shelley's in the end of your letter, where you say "since I lost Shelley." Is it not strange that I should have transcribed for the first time, last night, the *Indian Serenade* that, together with some verses of Metastasio, accompanied that book? That I should have been reserved to tell the present possessor of them—to whom they were given by Captain Roberts—*what* the poem *was, and that it had been published!* It is preserved religiously; but the characters are all but illegible, and I needed a good magnifying-glass to be quite sure of such of them as remain. The end is that I have rescued three or four variations in the reading of that divine little poem, as one reads it, at least, in the *Posthumous Poems*. It is headed the *Indian Serenade* (not *Lines to an Indian Air*). In the first stanza the seventh line is "Hath led me;" in the second, the third line is "And the champak's odours

fail;" and the eighth, "O! Beloved as thou art!" In the last stanza, the seventh line was, "Oh, press it to thine own again." Are not all these better readings? (even to the "Hath" for "Has.") There, I give them you as you gave us Milton's hair. If I have mistaken in telling you, you will understand and forgive.

I think I will ask my wife to say a word or two so I shall be sure that you forgive. Now let my wife say the remainder. All I have wished to do—know how little likely it was that I should succeed in that—was to assure you of my pride and affectionate gratitude.—God bless you ever,

R. B.

Dear friend, I will say; for I feel it must be something as good as friendship that can forgive and understand this silence, so much like the veriest human kind of ingratitude. When I look back and think—all this time after that letter, and not a sign made—I wonder. Yet, if you knew! First of all, we were silent because we waited for information which you seemed to desire. . . . . Then there were sadder reasons. Poor *Aurora*, that you were so more than kind to (oh, how can I think of it?), has been steeped in tears, and some of them of a very bitter sort. Your letter was addressed to my husband, you knowing by your delicate true instinct where your praise would give most pleasure; but I believe Robert had not the heart to write when I felt that I should not have the spirits to add a word in the proper key. When we came here from Florence a few months ago to get repose and cheerfulness from the sight of the mountains, we said to ourselves that we would speak to you at ease—instead of which the word was taken from our own mouth, and we have done little but sit by sick beds and meditate on gastric fevers. So disturbed we have been—so sad! our darling precious child the last victim. To see him lying still on his golden curls, with cheeks too scarlet to suit the poor patient eyes, looking so frightfully like an angel! It was very hard.

But this is over, I do thank God, and we are on the point of carrying back our treasure with us to Florence to-morrow, quite recovered, if a little thinner and weaker, and the young voice as merry as ever. You are aware that that child I am more proud of than twenty *Auroras*, even after Leigh Hunt has praised them. He is eight years old, has never been "*crammed*," but reads English, Italian, French, German, and plays the piano—then, is the sweetest child! sweeter than he looks. When he was ill, he said to me, "You pet! don't be unhappy about *me*. Think it's a boy in the street, and be a little sorry, but not unhappy." Who could not be unhappy, I wonder?

I never saw your book called the *Religion of the Heart*. It's the only book of yours I never saw, and I mean to wipe out that reproach on the soonest day possible. I receive more dogmas, perhaps (my "perhaps" being in the dark rather), than you do. I believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ in the intensest sense—that he was God absolutely. But for the rest, I am very unorthodox—about the spirit, the flesh, and the devil, and if you would not let me sit by you, a great many churchmen wouldn't; in fact, churches do all of them, as at present constituted, seem too narrow and low to hold true Christianity in its proximate developments. I, at least, cannot help believing them so.

My dear friend, can we dare, after our sins against you—can we dare *wish* for a letter from you sometimes? Ask, we dare not. May God bless you. Even if you had not praised me and made me so grateful, I should be grateful to you for three things—for your poetry (that first), then for Milton's hair, and then for the memory I have of our visit to you, when you sat in that chair and spoke so mildly and deeply at once.

Let me be ever affectionately yours,

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

To Mr. and Mrs. Browning.

Hammersmith, 17th November, 1857.*

My dear Friends,—Though I was extremely glad at the sight of your kind letter, and have ever since been wondering how I could refrain from telling you so on the instant, yet being occupied with pressing correspondence at the time, I became delayed, partly by the languor which always ensues with me on exertion, but chiefly by an old and in vain constantly punished habit which I have, of thinking I must needs write replies to letters which interest me very much, as long and as full of matter as the satisfaction which they give me. I am very sorry, particularly on an occasion like this; for when friends express regret for anything, I always feel as if such subjection to myself put me in the wrong with them, and as if I had nothing to do but to go down lower on my own knees, and express my greater regret for having subjected them to the subjection. At all events, you will see, that the delay of weeks on such an occasion becomes, in my mind, something quite as much needing pardon, as that of months on the other; for if the idea of what it was incumbent on me to do in return for a letter of reasonable dimensions became the vast thing which I speak of, what must have been the case with yourselves, when the mere sight of such a huge epistle as mine must have visited you with a sense of a monster of responsibility at once? I do not, I assure you (as after these confessions you may easily believe, and I could give you more, if you needed them), at all wonder at your putting off the day of answering, especially considering the successions of circumstances you speak of, including the illness of your boy, the terribleness of whose beauty at such a time I can well imagine; for though I have not seen it myself in such beauty physical, I have, several times, in beauty spiritual and leave-taking, still more terrible to re-

* Found among Leigh Hunt's manuscripts. Probably a rough draft.

member, for the leave-taking was well founded; I dare not say more yet, except that I now feel to belong almost as much to the next world as to this. The common places of this world often appear very strange to me, and the uncommon places of the next, as if they must needs be things household and familiar, and the only explainers, and reconcilers to themselves, of that other, imperfected wonder: as indeed, thank God, I believe they will be.

I forgot to say, dear Mrs. Browning, at the beginning of my letter, that one of the accumulators of the causes of my delay was a theological temptation occasioned me by a passage in your letter which you will readily call to mind, but which I found it would be impossible for me to discuss, I should again have become so voluminous, and, I little doubt, so unsatisfactory. This you will as readily believe when I tell you that the only two books of paramount authority with me are the Book of Nature, and the heart of its reader, Man; and that the operations in the one, and the aspirations of the other (though I fully concede, as I am bound to do, all the reconcilements, and possibilities, and transcendentations of every kind, which greater understandings and imaginations than my own may see in other books), compel me—if so glad a conclusion can be called compulsion—to be of the opinion that God is the unmingled, wholly benevolent, and conscious Spirit of Good, working through His agent, Man; that evil, where it *is* evil, and not a necessary portion of good (as it probably all is ultimately), is the difficulty presented to the course of this working by the unconscious, involuntary, and therefore unmalignant, mystery called Matter; that God, though not immediately or in all stages of His processes almighty, is ultimately so; and that His constant occupation is the working out of heavens in place and time, in which prospection and retrospection somehow or other become reconciled to the final conscious beatitude of all the souls that have ever existed:—See! I have not been able to avoid my theology at last!—as to not letting you sit by me, most pleased and honoured shall I feel myself if you will let me sit on any

form of good-natured allowance by *you*. Your husband, I think, would be equally charitable. I have not addressed you two separately in this letter, except as I might by turns, if sitting with you in a room; though I feel that you have separately addressed myself for very kind reasons on this special occasion. I have also left myself little more room in this sheet of paper, and I dare not take another for fear of again running out of bounds and making my head giddy. But not the less, dear Robert Browning, do I thank you for all which you have said to me so warm-heartedly about yourself, about myself, about the divine Portuguese sonnets, about Kenyon, about Shelley, about everything, of the gracious words to me of your wife. God bless you both, and enable me to live to commune with you again in person before I rejoin the dear ones with whom I trust we shall all be some day in company together.—Your obliged and affectionate LEIGH HUNT.

Amongst other friends of my father's, I have written to Mr. Story, asking for any letters that he might not be unwilling to see published. Mr. Story was then at Rome. The greater part of his letters were in America, but he had one with him, which I print. The circumstances which called it forth are explained in the following letter to myself.

TO WILLIAM STORY.

Palazzo Barberini, Rome, 4th March, 1861.

MY DEAR MR. HUNT,—. . . . I need not say to you how deeply I value them, not only as expressions of kindly feelings and interest in me, but as being in themselves most interesting indications of the refined culture, the gentle playful spirit, the elegant ease, the pure character, and hearty manliness of your father. He was most kind to me; and among my pleasantest memories of England, are the days which he illuminated for me by his genial and flowing conversation.

Of all the literary men I have known, no one, it seems to me, so thoroughly corresponded in his person, manner, and impression to the idea one would form of an author from his works. There was the same exquisite charm in both. His conversation was like his essays, full, rich, genial, and pervaded with a delicate perfume. I was at once drawn to him in affection, and he was so kind as to treat me always as a friend. . . . . Your father received the first letter from Mr. L. while I was in London, and wrote me a note asking me for information about him. This I was unable to give him, as I had never before heard of Mr. L.; but, at the suggestion of your father, I went to see Mr. Buchanan, to whom Mr. L. referred him, and got what information I could from that source. After some consideration, your father concluded to accept the proposition of Mr. L. as to the publication of a collected edition of all his works, and of a volume of selected sonnets; and, as I was then on my way to America, he asked me to become the medium of his communications with Mr. L. In this way I became the intermediary person between them; Mr. L. writing to your father through me, and your father answering in like manner, and both begging me to read their letters. Besides this, I transacted all the business of arranging with Messrs. Ticknor and Fields, in relation to the publication of this projected work. Everything was going on well when I left America on my return to Europe in 1856; and since then I have heard nothing of the publication of these books, and fear that something untoward occurred.

I merely relate these facts as preliminary to the incident which is alluded to in the enclosed letter of your father. Standing in the position that I did of intermediary, Mr. L. frequently wrote to me; and in one of these letters he said that he was desirous in some way of giving a more permanent expression to your father of his great admiration for his genius and his sense of his personal kindness than could be given by mere words, and stating that for this purpose he had set aside the sum of 500 dollars, with which he intended to

purchase something of value, and ask your father's acceptance of it. But, in the situation in which he was, he found it difficult to settle upon any appropriate gift. He was lame—could not go personally to look up anything, and was in the country, where little choice was to be made. Under these circumstances, he asked my opinion as to whether he could with any delicacy ask your father to accept this sum, and expend it any way that to himself should seem fit. I frankly wrote to your father stating the circumstances, and he wrote me back a letter declining to accept the offer, but expressing gratification at the feeling that had prompted it. Mr. L., however, was still anxious to carry out his design; and again wrote to me saying that he feared, as he was known to your father to be a slave-holder, that it might be supposed that this money was tainted in its source by slavery, and that this might be the motive of the refusal, and asking me to assure your father that this was not the case,—the money not being derived from the labour of slaves, nor connected with slavery. I again wrote to your father, stating the facts, and assuring him that he would be greatly gratifying Mr. L. by accepting his offer. In this letter I now send you his answer. I think it very important that the world should know the facts, and read the words with which he again refuses to accept this present, and clear its judgment as to his feelings and conduct on such matters. The allusion he makes will be intelligible to all, and shows how deeply he felt the wound which was given; and thoroughly unjust it was, if the blow really was aimed at him. . . . .—Yours most faithfully,

W. W. Story.

Hammersmith, 13th August, 1856.

My dear William Story,—Heartily do I congratulate you on your return to Europe, knowing how much you desired it; and I wish as heartily that I could accept your kind invitation, and pass a few days with you at Walton. Rich and rare days they would be to me; but since Mrs. Hunt has been so helpless in her limbs, I have never been able to be comfortable

away from her at night-time. I become haunted with fears of fire, &c. I must content myself, therefore, with hoping to see you and Mrs. Story once and away again, some evening or evenings before you go to Italy. Give her, pray, our very kindest remembrances; and send mine also, when you write next, to Mr. Lowell, with the great regrets for the long and abundant evening which I hoped to enjoy with you all three.

May I live to enjoy it yet! If not, may it be packed up for me like a bud, somewhere in some ultra-flowering corner of futurity: for who is to limit the possibility of time, space, and the *recompensing?*

Your book and letter found me with my two future American books,—the *Poetical Works* and the *Sonnet-book*, one on each side of me,—the latter quite finished, all but another sonnet or two from new authors (who have been welling up in this manner week after week, for months, which is the reason why it has not gone off sooner), the other almost equally advanced, but still waiting also for poems out of print which I cannot recover, and I fear (perhaps I should rather *hope*), must give up. At all events neither of them shall wait longer than next week, especially now that I have heard again of Mr. L., who, I was beginning to fear, had given *me* up. What a good man he is! And what a good man his father; and how worthy, both of them, to be the only holders of slaves,—their slaves evidently being none.

But when the fact of their having slaves suggested itself to me, I had made up my mind that such kind masters somehow they must be, and it was not with reference to slaves at all that I declined the generous offer you speak of. Oh, no! Nor do I think the man truly generous who cannot both give and receive. But, my dear Story, my heart has been deeply wounded, some time back, in consequence of my being supposed to carry such opinions to a practical extreme; and though the person who was thought to have meant to imply it, expressed his "deep concern" at having been so misconstrued, it gave me a shock so great that, as long as I live,

it will be impossible for me to forego the hope of outliving all similar chances, by conduct which none can misinterpret, let them be as unlike the L.'s as they may (for of course I never put them into such a category), or how could I have borne to let them take the trouble for me they do? Oh, no! I respect, I love them, but more is impossible; and I am sure they will think so, for my sake, in proportion as they respect and love me. It is late in life to begin to outlive chances of any kind; but I have a sort of indestructible faith in the combination of right, and will; and at all events, not a single honest man shall misbelieve in me, that I can help.

Dear Story, your book makes me love you still better than I did before, for many reasons, at least for some very fine esoterical reasons; so you see, while I am praising you, I am praising the discernment and even congeniality of your affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

TO EDWIN BOUCHER.

Hammersmith, 27th October; 1856.

SIR,—From all which I hear and see of the invention of Mr. Sparkhall, I cannot but think it would be hailed by everybody as a most unlooked for and singular completion of the effect desirable in works of this nature. To present the spectator, at one and the same time, with both sides of the way in the journey which he seems to be taking, is certainly not doing the thing any longer by halves. It makes me wish to find myself without delay in the midst of the scenes through which you propose to convey us: to be traversing the streets of Paris and Rome, and piercing the gorges of Asiatic and American mountains.

The next thing, I suppose, which we are to reckon upon in exhibitions of this kind (for in this age of marvels who is to say what is not to come next?) will be some invention, by means of stoves and ventilators, for giving us a taste of the very climates through which the scenes are conveying us;

now a cold blast from Russia, and now a zephyr from Greece! Nor should I wonder, if we were to stop occasionally at the doors of inns and hotels, and be served by some local "Wizard" with drinks out of omniferous bottles, and nosegays from interminable hats.—I am, sir, your sincere well-wisher,

LEIGH HUNT.

RECOGNITION OF THE PUBLIC SERVICES OF DR. SOUTHWOOD SMITH.

At a meeting held at the residence of the Earl of Shaftesbury on the 7th of May, 1856, it was resolved—

That this meeting, deeply impressed with the untiring and successful labours of Dr. Southwood Smith, in the cause of Social Amelioration, and specially recognizing the value of these labours in the great cause of Sanitary Improvement, are anxious to tender him some mark of their personal esteem.

That, accordingly, a Bust of Dr. Southwood Smith be executed in marble and presented to some suitable Institution, as an enduring memorial of his eminent services in the promotion of the Public Health.

INSCRIPTION FOR THE BUST OF DR. SOUTHWOOD SMITH.

"Ages will honour, in their hearts enshrined,
Thee, Southwood Smith, physician of mankind;
Giver of air, light, health to every home
Of the rich poor of happier times to come."

LEIGH HUNT.

Oh, how sorry I am not to be able to send the inscription final! but I cannot satisfy myself yet with the turning of the second couplet. My thoughts are constantly adverting to it however, both as a duty and a comfort. I say to myself when pangs press hard, "Dr. Smith's couplet;" and so begin thinking upon that, and rhyming.

Pray make my compliments to the domains of both the Shaftesburys,—the one, "a best good Christian, though he knew it not" (as Pope said of Garth); the other as best or still better a Christian, as being more practical, though he thinks he knows a great deal of it which the other didn't know. But the heart of the one was at least never contradicted by *his* doctrine, and the heart of the other is triumphant in spite of *his!* What remains divine and worthy, but only what is good in each?—Ever most affectionately yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

TO SOUTHWOOD SMITH.

Hammersmith, 28th January, 1857.

DEAR, VERY DEAR DOCTOR,—*her* and my most kind friend, and prolonger of her existence,—

I was not aware till this moment, when I see *The Times*, that any intelligence of my bereavement had been sent to a newspaper, or indeed any where else; otherwise I would have taken courage to put pen to paper yesterday, or even the day before, sooner than you should not have been the first to be told it, save one person with whom other circumstances had put me in communication. Such of my family as were not with me at the time, learnt it by coming; but you were the first person, out of the family pale, to whom the news was due; and every feeling of my heart would have hastened to send it.

For what did you not do for her, and for how many years? Come from a distance to her at any call, and through all obstacles; deliver her from racking pains; strengthen her through long tranquil intervals to bear more; see her finally, some ten years since, through the worst (for she never had such again, suffer though she did); do all which skill and zeal could possibly do for her at last: and all this with the wonted beautiful liberality of your profession to literature

out of suits with fortune. Well might she think of you as she did; and you know what that was.

In *her* name, and in my own, and in that of all my family, I thank and bless you with tears in my eyes,—trusting we shall all meet where, surely, our sorrows will be explained to us, and "all tears wiped off from all faces." Your affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 9th February.

. . . . If I could envy you any good, I should envy you your *Bridge* over the *Wey*, which

"Rolls a milky wave,"

as Pope says; especially as, by what you say of it, the ground is not too moist to be healthy. I have always had the most pleasing ideas of that part of the country; of Chertsey too, where Cowley lived, which I suppose by the post-mark on your letter is not far off. . . . .

To BRYAN C. L. HUNT.

Hammersmith, 6th January, 1857.

MY DEAR, GOOD, LITTLE BRYAN COURTHOPE LEIGH HUNT,—Your grandmamma sends you her kindest love, and was very glad at receiving a letter from you; but as she is too ill to write herself, I thank you in her name. Your letter is a very nice, sincere letter, all out of your own head, and thankful; and you have taken pains to make the writing clear, and have told us what news you have got to tell; all which makes a letter just what it ought to be, as far as it is in your power to write one; and I hope that however old you may live to be, and whatever longer and better letters you may be able to write, you may never write a letter less sincere, or feel a wish to write one less kind: for sincerity and kindness are

the two best things in the world, as you will know by-and-by still better than you can now.

I am glad that Kath has got a donkey which behaves itself so properly as to trot, though by the man's being so "far away behind it," it would seem as if it could also kick; and I don't suppose it does that. Perhaps he is only making as if.—Your loving grandfather,

LEIGH HUNT.

To MARGARET A. L. HUNT.

Hammersmith, 2nd May.

MY DEAR MARGARET,—If the weather remain propitious, and you have nothing better or more immediate to attend to (in which case you will oblige me by setting me aside, for what I want is not a matter of necessity), will you go to the Museum for me, and see if you can manage the following commissions?

First, seek for the *Poesie di Carlo Maria Maggi*, and copy out of them for me the sonnet beginning—

"Sono un uomo lunghissimo ed asciutto."

Second, seek for Burney's *History of Music*, and Burney's *Life of Metastasio*, and see what is said in either of them (looking first for him in the indexes), or rather in both, of a pastoral-christened gentleman of the name of "*Silvio* Stampiglia," and copy for me (provided it be short) what is said of him; quoting, at the end of your extract, book, volume, and page; he was precursor of one Apostolo Zeno (who preceded Metastasio) as the poet and writer of dramas at the Court of the German Emperor. I have succeeded at last in getting Houseman. Thanks for first Museum trip from your loving grandfather,

L. H.

Love and congratulations to all on *fine* weather. I am seeing land in my work; so that I hope shortly to see Bed-

ford Street. Tell me, when you write, how your father is; and beg him not to write a volume a day.

Hammersmith, 13th May.

MY DEAR MARGARET,—My work still keeping me hard at it, I availed myself of your considerateness about not writing, and I should not write now but that I must give you, I find, an additional commission, if you have nothing more requisite to do at home—which is, to look into the works of an old French poet of the name of BELLAY, find a certain set of sonnets in it called "Visions," and copy out for me Vision 13th.

I do not know the French title, unfortunately, of these sonnets—I know little of Bellay himself, except through Spenser's version of what *he* calls the Visions, and perhaps number 13 in Spenser may not be number 13 in Bellay. If so, I don't know how to help you, except by saying that the sonnet is about a "spring" (*fontaine*), and some "nymphs" and "satyrs," and "*Pactolus*"—all which words must be in the original, and may serve you as a guide. Pactolus in French will probably be *Pactole*. The sonnet in Spenser begins—

> "I saw a spring out of a rock forth rayle,
> As clear as cristall 'gainst the sunnie beames,
> The bottome yellow, like the golden grayle
> That bright *Pactolus* worketh with his streames," &c.

If you can't find it, or Bellay himself, never mind, you know. It is not necessary, only I fidget to make things complete, and I wish to see how far the French sonnet and Spenser's translation agree.

Don't think my scrawl uncourteous—it is only haste. You know I have all the reverence due to you from your obedient grandfather,

L. H.

To Julia T. L. Hunt.

Hammersmith, 10th August, 1857.

My dear Child,—We were very glad to hear from you so soon again; the more so inasmuch as you will have been glad yourself at having written. And you very properly fill your letter with as many particulars about the place, and your movements in it, and way of life, as you can; for it is thus that absent friends are enabled to find themselves still together, as much as is possible.

I should certainly exclaim, as you say I should, in threading your "beautiful" lanes; and I should think the kindness which everybody shows you still more beautiful; for charming as inanimate nature is, there is nothing so charming, after all, as the expression of kindness in the human countenance.

Pray look at the "house to let" by all means, and at any other house to let, provided it would not tax my old limbs to get up to it. And be particular as to their rents, and their gardens. . . . . —Your ever loving father,

L. H.

I read in to-day's paper that the Queen is at sea, and is expected to touch at the Channel Islands. If you see her, I expect that you will shake half-a-dozen handkerchiefs at her instead of one. I have re-opened the letter on purpose to say so.

3rd September, 1857.

My dear Jule,—It is very good of you to request me not to write as a matter of course, if writing to you tires me too much in addition to other tasks of my pen; but I take all the tasks very gently and briefly at present. I am going on well, and, above all, never like to receive a letter from you without sending you one in return. The omission would do me more harm than good, even if the writing tired me

more than it does, and I take care not to overdo it, as you see.

It pleases me very much that you can still enjoy yourself so much; that your friends continue so kind, and that whenever you see a new scene you find it beautiful. I see you walking in the spot you pointed out in the picture; though as *goufre* means *gulf*, the place so called must mean rather the sea than the land. And yet "I don't know," as the phrase is (a very judicious phrase, by-the-by), for "gulf" has been sometimes used to express a deep place without water, and it may do so in the instance before us. Perhaps it applies both to the land and water conjointly. Guernsey appears to consist of the tops of sea mountains; so you go to bed at night like a mermaid—not forgetting your looking-glass, eh?

The Chief Baron, I begin to fear, must be ill after his labours, for he does not come. I hope he has nothing to dread in India. There have been Pollocks there formerly, and may, alas! be still. . . . And am ever, dear child, your loving father,

. . . .

L. H.

Cornwall Road, Hammersmith,
12th September, 1857.

My dear Child,—Your flowers came to us like yourself, full of brightness, and we all hailed them as I opened your letter at breakfast. I must thank, however, Margaret for them, who may well give people heartsease, if her good qualities answer to her face. May you fall as soft as summer rain upon care and sorrow, as you are bright as "sunbeams in joy." Tell Margaret that I have put her heartsease, according to order, in a book, and that the book is one of the volumes of my Spenser, and you know what regard I have for those. Also I venture to give her a grandfatherly kiss in return for her young ones. I have not yet received the Tuesday's *Star*, but I daresay it will come with the next post. The passage about me, I suppose, is one that appeared

the other day in a London paper, and that was written by one of the American gentlemen whose good-nature made them enjoy the evening here, of which I told you. . . . My delight in your enjoyments is only to be surpassed by my anxiety that they may be lasting and well-founded. . . . . God bless you, dear Jule, prays ever your loving father,

L. H.

Hammersmith, 15th September, 1857.

My dear Child,— . . . . . I cannot help wishing that you did not think a grave Sunday so very dull a thing, or that you could not *un*dullen it, even by the help of a grave book; especially as I was so much pleased, you know, not long since, by finding you capable of being interested in a reflective book, and thoughtfully reading it through. When I was a child, and in excessive spirits, my dear mother would sometimes say to me, "Leigh, come and sit down here by me, and let us try to think a little." Now this was when I was a child; but a certain young lady, though she is *my* child, is not a child now—eh?—in the ordinary chronological sense of the word: so I should conceive it not impossible, especially on the strength of what I have just said about the reflective book, that she might fancy herself, once and away, on Sundays, sitting down, or supposing herself sitting down, by the side of her father, and "trying," as he did (for I used to try), to "think a little." Thank my kind new friend, Margaret, and yourself, for the new flowers. The unscented ones I have put in the Spenser: the others, all but one, in the little Bohemian glass box which your aunt gave me, in order that people may be able to enjoy the perfume: and the one, the night-blowing stock, has been put into the little vial that held iodine, to give us the same result when its hour for being sweet arrives. . . .—Your ever loving father,

L. H.

Hammersmith, 22nd September.

My dear Child,— . . . Thanks for all your caressing words and flowers, and particularly for what you tell me of your music, reading, &c. You cannot tell me too much of what you do; for then I live most with you, and know what is found to agree best with you, and do most good to your health. Tell me, therefore, in your next all the particulars of what you eat and drink at all your meals; your times of rising, walking, and going to bed; what music you play and sing; and what books you read. I should like, also, to know the names, professions, &c., of as many persons as you become at all acquainted with, and what you think of them, as far as you feel qualified, and warranted, to judge, upon acquaintance so new. An old and amiable friend, Captain Richardson, author of *Literary Leaves* (which he was greatly pleased to hear you had copied some things out of), spent the evening with Henry, Jace, and myself, yesterday. Only think of his and his family's good fortune in having got a year's leave of absence from India just before its horrors broke out.—Your loving father,

L. H.

* * * * * *

PP.S.—I must add another postscript, to tell you what little Thornton said just now to the waterman. In Spenser is an account, among other sea-monsters, of a tremendous fellow called "the griesly wasserman,"

"Who makes his game
The flying ships with swiftness to pursue."

"Griesly," in old poetry, means anything so terrible to look at as to make you shudder. Now, after my wonted fashion, you know, of mixing up verse and prose, great and small, terrible and comical, &c., I have been in the habit of calling the waterman "the griesly wasserman" (*wasserman*, which is a German word, and got by Spenser out of a German author,

signifying *waterman*). Thornton, child-like, imitated this habit; and having had a penny given him this morning to give to the waterman, we overheard him in the front-garden, saying to him, "Griesly wasserman, which hand?" meaning, you know, that he was to guess which of the two hands held out to him contained the money. The effect was very ludicrous, and gave your sister and me a hearty fit of laughter. I asked Thornton, when he came back, what the waterman said to him?

Answer: "He said 'thankye,' and laughed." So "the griesly," I suppose, had been told the meaning of his name.

To Mrs. George Smyth.

Hammersmith, 19th October.

Mr. Leigh Hunt presents his compliments to Mrs. George Smyth, and is sorry that he cannot recommend —— as a servant. He does not think her ill-intentioned, or radically dishonest:—indeed he has never known her dishonest in the ordinary sense of the word;—but he cannot be sure that she is otherwise, from her frequent recourses to falsehood; and her temper cannot be relied on, though she is quickly appeased. Her main characteristic is weakness; and he pities her very much, because he thinks it is owing, partly to constitutional infirmity, and partly to her having been brought up on a system of fear, which renders her presumptuous where it is not maintained. She has symptoms of a tendency to paralysis in the head; and Mr. Hunt and his family are of opinion, that she ought to be taken care of at home, and not go out to service at all. She gave them indeed to understand that such was the case; and as her statement to that effect turns out to be incorrect, perhaps Mrs. Smyth will be kind enough to show her relations this letter, in the hope that the observations may induce them to reflect on the matter.

To D. L. Richardson.

Hammersmith, 26th June, 1857.

My dear Richardson,—Welcome as your letter was, and greatly as I desired to answer it on the instant, it found me so busy preparing a packet for America which ought to have gone off weeks before, that I did not dare to leave what I was about: and now the packet is so sure to take me another week, perhaps a fortnight, before I can close it, and I fancy you so wondering perhaps why I make no sign, that I can no longer help attending to the letter first. But why didn't you set me a better example as to amount of letter? See the four pages which I am about to fill and make amends in a response, and I confine myself even to these in self-defence. I mean I did not dare to take a larger sheet; for I can never write any thing without emotion of some sort, much less to correspondents whom I love, and time is imperiously calling on me still; and another friend is wondering in the west, just as you might be in the east; but as he is the younger friend, though a very good one too, I must positively risk his arrangement a little longer although it has been of long standing. . . . .

But now, my dear Richardson, to speak a little of yourself after all these three pages of letter about *me*. Pray tell me how you are and what is your mode of life day by day, and even the sort of rooms you live in, and where you go, and all in short you do as far as you can tell it in reasonable compass. I want when I think of you to be able to live *with* you; and in return, I will tell you all about my life, item for item. Think of my not having yet read more of your book than some 61 pages (down to the word designers) though I could not help dipping by anticipation here and there, and picking out certain plums about myself! Yes, even so! I own to the vanity or the affection, or both united; and suspect, in self-defence, that most authors do the same if they would but own it. But, sonnets, sonnets, sonnets, and own poems, own poems, own poems,—I have been forced to think of

nothing else (so to speak) for I know not how many weeks past; and I look upon your book, which lies green on my table, as the garden in which I mean to go and have my fill the moment my packet is gone. That is a capital passage you have given us about *the soul of Pope unfolded;* and I rejoice in your rebuke of the beloved old horribly-in-the-way anti-gardening Johnson, "Blinking Sam," as he said Reynolds should *not* paint him—but as he here has painted himself. The sonnets too I read, hoping to find something fresh for my American friend, but I see they are repetitions of those dead *Literary Leaves*, and I had already made my selection from those for the purpose of submitting them to his approbation, which I doubt not they will have as they deserve. Pray tell me how literature stands in the East, both Eastern and English, and whether there is yet such a thing as a selection of all the best *stories* (in English) from the Persian and Hindoo poets and others. There ought to be and it ought to be called the Eastern Story Teller, and sell famously.

I have lost more than half of my teeth, my dear Richardson, and though I still walk upright, I have descended visibly into the vale of years, and have had many sorrows and calamities since last we wrote. But some of the calamities were from Heaven, and to those, though with tears that rush into my eyes almost daily after the lapse of years, I bow, thank God! in hope of the heaven to come; and as to earthly calamities, I have no longer such as used to agonize me with the knock at the door, and the worst of the others have a habit of turning round at last and begging my pardon; as indeed they should; and I grant the pardon heartily, like an odd sort of Christian, and so all begins over again properly. No, not all, thank Heaven! but only the best. But I shall be talking to you in riddles, and those obsolete. Dear Richardson, write me a good long letter like the good friend you are, and believe me ever most affectionately yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

P.S.—Pray, tell me what publications you have *not* got of

mine, in order that I may send copies for keepsakes, for I suppose you see their names in advertisements.

28th July.

PP.S.—The letter has been detained all this while in consequence of a promise given me, that it should be conveyed to India personally by a gentleman who never made his appearance! Meantime, I have read all your book with the interest you may imagine. But I see you keep birds. Will you tell me why you do so? I do not ask the question in levity much less with irony, but I hope so mooted as it seems at all the points in that question, that I am very desirous of hearing what is the final answer which so good and kind a man as yourself gives to the objections upon it. God bless you!

Hammersmith, 8th October, 1857.

My dear Richardson,—There is no necessity whatever for an introduction of you to my son. He spoke the other day as if he recollected you well, and in such a manner as showed how glad he would be to see you again. I suppose he was too young at the time to be recollected by yourself. Still, if you prefer an introduction of *some* kind, will you let this letter serve for one? I think he would like it better himself, than one of a more formal nature. I read the papers about the College and yourself directly, and with much interest, wondering if your quoters of English poetry would possibly be among our cutters up, now or ever. If any of them would come to *me* with such an intention, I would quote your sonnets to them;—to say nothing of your speeches. But notwithstanding all we have heard I cannot think the thing possible in those quarters:

Ingenuos didicisse Richardsonos

(pardon the prosody)

Emollit Hindos nec sinit esse—

like their countrymen—nay, "emollit" won't do either: they have too much of that already, in the bad sense, and

have horribly shown us how effeminacy and cruelty can meet. Your emolliences have a tonic in them which on this occasion would demand a better word.

But why don't you write a book instantly, and tell us your Indian experiences in reference, as much as possible, to the present crisis?—Your professorship, I suppose, would render it improper. Well:—we must wait till every body can speak, native as well as foreign.

In the hope of seeing you soon again, and not at all wondering at all the good which your friends and pupils say of you, I am, dear Richardson, ever most truly yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

TO ISAAC LATIMER.

Hammersmith, 26th November, 1857.

Thank you, my dear sir, for your transference of the verses from Catullus to your columns. They are favourites of mine (if an author may say so of anything which he has had a hand in), they come so truly *home*—that is to say, the original comes—to everybody's feelings.

I do not know whether the *Plymouth Journal* dislikes to correct its errors of the press. There are objections to such proceedings with some journals; and if yours be one of them, pray think no more of the matter. I am an old soldier to such scars, and can truly say I care nothing whatever for them, compared with the goodwill that is inclined to quote my verses at all. Otherwise, I would say to your printer, Be good enough to put a *the* after the word "all" in the first line, and to take away the letter *t* from the word "sight" in the fourth.—Yours, my dear sir, very heartily,

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 14th December, 1857.

MY DEAR SIR,—I should have thanked you as promptly for your letter as you wrote it, had I not been threatened, as I

sometimes am, with a visitation of giddiness in the head. I am now better, and have to say, that my friend ——— was, or had been, a house-painter, or plumber, or something in that kind of business. I became acquainted with him when I was at Plymouth, on my way to Italy. He was one of that class of men who of all people appear to me best entitled to the designation of "gentlemen born;" for, though his occupation was thus humble, and there was added to it a diminutive and somewhat deformed person (in the shoulders), he had the look, manners, tastes, and true feeling of a gentleman, properly so called. His fine eye and sensitive cast of countenance often reminded me of the portraits of Pope; but he was more handsome. I was very sorry to hear that he had died in reduced circumstances; a report which appears to be corroborated by those of his widow; and I should have been glad to learn what his friends might have to say about either. I have now a card before me, in which his daughter proposes to give lessons in painting on glass, Berlin needlework, and other arts taught to ladies; and I would gladly gather together every kind of recommendation of her in which I could feel warranted.

I have little or no recollection of his locality in Plymouth, and am not sure you might not hear of him in *Stonehouse*, which was the quarter in which I myself was located when I was there.

I will not apologize to you for giving you this additional trouble on such an occasion, guessing, from all I see of you on paper, that he was a man in whom you would have taken an interest for his own sake.—Very sincerely yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

Ah! days of the *Tatler*, when I used to see so many pleasant farces, and write on them afterwards at the printing-office with such very cold feet! And poor Sir William, I am afraid, does not walk off much more comfortably.

The occasion of the subjoined letter is explained in a note from Mr. Buckstone to the editor of these volumes. "On my taking the chair at Stratford-upon-Avon to celebrate Shakspeare's birthday at the Town Hall there in 1858, I referred in my speech to Leigh Hunt's suggestion offered in his delightful *Indicator*, that the London theatres should be illuminated on the birthday of the poet, and that the word 'Shakspeare' would look well on the front of those establishments. After quoting the passage to be found in that work, I informed the company that the Haymarket Theatre was so illuminated on that night."

To J. B. Buckstone.

Hammersmith, 28th April [1858].

Dear Sir,—Accept my best thanks for the honour you did one of the worshippers of the great poet, while you were adding, literally, new brilliance to the name of Shakspeare. Setting even myself aside, I should have rejoiced at seeing you behave with so much candour and handsomeness to *any* suggester of the good deed; though, of course, I cannot, on my own account, but be doubly gratified. You have delighted many audiences and spectators in many parts; but believe me, you never performed one in which a right gentleman's nature could have been more completely brought out, than when you thus appeared in the character of *Yourself*. Your most obliged and sincere servant,

Leigh Hunt.

To Lady Shelley.

Hammersmith, 10th June [1858].

Dear Lady Shelley,—The letter of yesterday would have received its due acknowledgments by return of post; but an unusual morning's work was so resented by my very gradual friend "convalescence," that I took the liberty of postponing

them till to-day, especially as the delay appeared to be of no consequence as regards anything practical.

For, alas! it is impossible for me to come to Boscombe at present, much as I hope and trust to be your visitor by-and-by. The sooner the better, as far as my own wishes are concerned; but you may judge what a state my health has been in, and during how long a period, when I tell you, that for years past—for *many* years past—hospitable receptions have been awaiting me, east, west, north, and south, from Edinburgh to the Isle of Wight, and from Lincolnshire to Belfast, and of not one of them have I been able to avail myself. I could not even get, last summer, as far as Hounslow, though my inviter, besides being a judge (the Lord Chief Baron), was as pleasant and mirth-loving a man as your husband; nay, (to be *grander* still with you), could not even get, later still, though I wished it for every reason of gratitude, and as sick man to sick man, to my late dear friend (for so he permitted me to call him), the Duke of Devonshire, near as he was to me at Chiswick. Nor had I ever been able, since the first time I knew him, which must now be some ten years ago, to set eyes on the glories of Chatsworth.

Not that I would sooner have gone to any house in the world, had health permitted it, than to that of my dearest friend Shelley's son, himself my friend, and of those whom he loved. Time was, when almost the only house I went to, anywhere, was the house at Putney. But I tell you all this, to excuse my incapability now.

However, the illness which I have just had, appears to have been a crisis long coming on; and my excellent doctor (Southwood Smith), gives me a hope that, even at my time of life, it may end in producing the change in me which of all others I desire, if I begin with getting the smallest changes of air, here and there; his own nest at Weybridge being one of my first flights, where I shall have my physician himself to help it. I am practising accordingly in the neighbourhood, like an old bird in second *unfledgehood;* and certain reasons, alas! for home sickness existing no longer (for one must

lament sometimes what even forces changes for the better upon us), perhaps I may be able to become a wanderer still, and roam once more where I please.

Here, looking up from my letter to see what it is o'clock, I am afraid that the length of it may possibly make me have lost another post. If so, lay it to the account of my zeal to explain myself; and believe me, dear Lady Shelley, most sincerely yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

P.S.—I need not add that I am still ready to do everything in the world in my power towards settling things as you wish. I wish you two were near me still. We could be quite uninterrupted here at any time or all times, for I am in the habit of being much alone, and can always be religiously left so for any special purpose. Oh, the post! the post!

Hammersmith, 17*th June*, 1858.

. . . I hope you do not think I made a brag of my great acquaintances in my last. Being persons of rank yourselves, I felt that I could with the less impropriety speak of such persons to you. I should not have thought of doing anything of the sort to friends in humbler condition; unless, indeed, I were intending to visit them first, and thus make a merit of postponing judges and dukes to their priority in point of friendship. Though, indeed, *such* judges, and *such* dukes, it would be hard to postpone to any human beings. Do not think it necessary to take up your time with saying much. Words from ladies, you know, are as good as paragraphs from other people.—Most truly yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

41, *High Street, Putney*,
Friday, 19*th August*, 1859.

DEAR LADY SHELLEY,—Your letter no sooner reaches me here to-day (in a parcel from Hammersmith) than it tells me

you have, in all probability, left town. However, as something *may* have occurred to detain you longer, I address this answer to Albemarle Street, with directions that it be sent after you, if gone.

I have been so unwell of late, that my friend, Mr. Reynell, bore me suddenly off, a fortnight ago, for a little change of air, to his house in this place; where, if you should still be in town, I need not say how glad I should be at any hour to see you: especially as the letters you speak of are with me. Next week I should have sent to Boscombe, for yours and Sir Percy's perusal (and I will still send them, if you are gone), two little articles which I have written in the *Spectator*, on occasion of the notice of the *Memorials* in that paper. . . . .—Very truly your ladyship's always.

LEIGH HUNT.

41, *High Street, Putney*,
21*st August*, 1859.

DEAR LADY SHELLEY,—This letter ought to have been written on Saturday, for your two journals came time enough, but I did not tell you in the morning how unwell I was, and a variety of circumstances conspiring to let the post-hour slip, I was next day unfortunately laid up—I should rather say doubled up—with some of the greatest internal pains I ever suffered, and which with the anxiety manifested by my kind hosts, seemed to force me to attend to nothing else. I say "seemed," because I could no doubt have exercised enough contrary force of will to have actually written a letter; and when I call to mind the short time which Sir Percy had to be with you, I am very sorry I did not. The pains are less to-day, though still severe at times; and they have weakened me so, that I avoid even talking with my hosts as much as I can. But in their intervals I write what I do. . . . . —Your ladyship's and Sir Percy's ever devoted friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

To Frederick Locker.*

Hammersmith, 26th November, 1858.

Dear Sir,—The world of verse has lately been in such an ultra-ambitious and ostentatious condition, thinking it necessary to be so excessively thinking, so imaginative, so analogical, —scoring every other word, as it were, in italics, and so intensifying great and small alike as to leave no keeping in its pages of light and shade, that a book like the one which you have been so good as to send me is really a surprise, as well as refreshment. Not that you want thinking either. Far from it; but your deepest thoughts sometimes take the slightest aspects, as is natural to men who have suffered as well as reflected, and who therefore learn to conciliate pains by playing with them. For such appears to have been your case, perhaps (pardon me), on a principle of extremes meeting; that is to say, from having had too much or too early a glut of prosperity, which may also be the reason why you do not care to write more at a time, or make a more serious continued effort; as I think you might do with advantage, for you have exactness, expression, and finish, and need not fear running into the fault of the time—overdoing; only, though a punster myself (which I take to be the privilege of a humourist), I would beg you in your lighter moods not to pun quite so often; and notwithstanding your powers of expression, I find you sometimes a little obscure, and requiring some study to get at your meaning. You may judge how pleased, as well as surprised, I was with your fresh and gallant manner, when I tell you I read the book through before I went to bed. I find myself particularly pleased with *The Wish*, *Bramble Rise*, *Piccadilly*, the *Widow's*

* Mr. Locker had been taken by Mr. Severn to see Leigh Hunt, and shortly afterwards he sent to Hammersmith a volume of verse which he had not long published, called *London Lyrics*. He also sent a little packet of very curious tea, a portion of some which had been sent to him from China by Lord Elgin.

Mite, Old Letters, the cat that by "some mistake" was "nearly famished," the line—

"He hopes she is happy, he knows she is fat,"

and divers happy rhymes and epigrammatic endings, especially the two last words in *St. George's, Hanover Square*, and what ought to have been the last word in the *Cradle*, namely, that at p. 11.

As to the noble-looking tea, will you write me a word to say how much or how little of it ought to be put into the pot, for we have nervous persons among us; also, whether there is any green in it. I am so fond of tea, and a reasonable amount of it does me so much good, that it is an old and habitual pun of mine to say that the last syllable of *tranquillity* ought to be spelt with an *ea* instead of a *y*. This tea of yours, however, is so substantial to the feeling, and of so grand an aspect, that I hold it in some awe, and think it should terminate the word *majesty* or grandiosity, or, perhaps, as it comes from the "Flowery Land," floridity. I suspect a very little will go a great way with us.

Trusting you found all well at home when you dutifully went thither, and heartily well pleased to think I shall see you again, I am, dear sir, very sincerely yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 17th January, 1859.

MY DEAR SIR,—I am not sure, but I am afraid that when you asked me yesterday whether I had lately seen Mr. Severn, I answered that I had not seen him since he came here with yourself. Now I *had*, and this morning I recollect it well, and wonder how I could have forgotten it (if forget I did). But I have observed of late—to what owing I cannot say, probably to old age—that when some particular points in a conversation have much interested me, and my attention is suddenly called to something else at the close of them, my mind is apt to feel confused, and memory not at my command.

As mistakes of this kind, however, sometimes lead to doubts of people's veracity when notes of conversation happen to be compared, and I should be very sorry to be the cause of such calamity either to myself or others, I trouble you with the perusal of this letter,—and am very sincerely yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 27th January, 1859.

DEAR MR. LOCKER,— . . . I shall now take occasion of another mistake which I have made myself before I was criticised upon it, to mention the only fault I can find with the verses on the *Charming Neighbour*, which otherwise are themselves charming, and that is the rhyme to "pianoforte." The Italians, the Tuscans at all events, roughen some of the consonants of their language, in order to invigorate its softness; you know they roll the *r*, in consequence, very strongly; as Milton is said to have done, who had been in Italy, and was also theoretically nice in such matters. So, as verses like yours have a right to have nice demands made upon them, and you have a proper poet's tendency to write all straightforward and put "the properest words in the properest places," I must exact, not only as a critic privileged by his old age to be presumptuous, but as the veritable friend and admirer of the vein which you undoubtedly possess, that good and desirable as the junction of the two words is in itself, for their characteristic sakes you will undo the said rhyme and get another. I would also recommend, in order to make the plot of the thing clear as possible to the reader at once (for the age of the heroine at first a little perplexed me) that a second title be given to the poem; as thus, "My next-door Neighbour," or child, damsel, bride, or some such thing. Perhaps, you could find a better intermediate word than damsel, but I have tried in vain. The whole effusion, depend upon it, is an excellent thing of its kind, and memory will retain it.

Let me thank you very much for this last letter of yours, which has emotion in it as well as witty and genial verses;

and pardon this overflowing manuscript of mine, for I am most sincerely yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 16th June, 1859.

Many thanks to Mr. Locker for beautiful flowers—still brilliant before me, and for the assurances they bring of continued kindly recollection.

LEIGH HUNT.

To MARIANNE GLIDDON.

Hammersmith.

MY DEAR MARIANNE,— . . . I say then, with all my heart, may God bless you! Continue to be sincere and affectionate; have no secrets from the good aunt who will lovingly guide you; acquire as many accomplishments as you can (for they are all resources and *dowries*, whether in or out of trouble); take a right gentlewoman's pride, above all, in being useful and helping, as well as ornamental; and the heart being thus right, I have no doubt that, with the brain which you gave such early signs of, all will go well with you now and ever; and you will assist others in prospering, as well as prosper yourself. . . . . .—Your affectionate grandfather,

LEIGH HUNT.

Mr. Fields, of the well-known publishing house in Boston, himself a graceful author, visited London, with his wife, in the summer of 1859. One day, he wrote a note inviting Leigh Hunt to breakfast. Here is the reply.

To JAMES T. FIELDS.

Hammersmith, 22nd January, 1859.

MY DEAR MR. FIELDS,—I grieve to say that it is impossible for me to come to breakfast. If I could do that, I should have recovered the sort of health which I most long for, and which till lately I had begun to despair of regaining, I had been so

often disappointed. A little change of air last autumn has given me reason to believe that more such change will, or at least may by degrees, set me up properly again on my locomotive legs; and then, please God, I mean to see everything again, and everybody. Heartily glad should I have been to say to-day, with the line in "Lycidas"—

"To-morrow to fresh *Fields* and pastures new."

As to "lips," which you and Mrs. Fields, like kindly readers, are so willing to see as well as hear, you will find an old man of seventy-five, whose teeth have almost all gone, carrying away something of his articulation with them. Those, however, in order to further my power and my right of re-appearing in the world, I am about to restore to myself by means of the dentist; and meantime I send to you both some verses which I translated once from Marot, and which, I believe, are not in the American edition of my poems; though I begin to think they might as well have been there as some others.

TO A LADY WHO WISHED TO SEE HIM.

(FROM THE FRENCH OF MAROT.)

I.

"She loved me, as she read my books,
And wished to see my face;
Gray was my beard, and dark my looks—
They lost me not her grace.

II.

"O gentle heart, O noble brow!
Full rightly didst thou see:
For this poor body, failing now
Is but my jail, not me.

III.

"Those eyes of thine found hope, and youth,
And vigour in my page;
And saw me better there, in truth,
Than through the mists of age."

Thus, you see, my dear Fields, you must still name your

day of coming here, without waiting for arrangement. Pray make no ceremony with me of any kind, but treat me as in every respect an old friend; for I am indeed very sincerely yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

"In reply to your father's note of June 22," says Mr. Fields, "I accused him of misquoting from Milton, and said there was no such line as—

'To-morrow to fresh fields and pastures new.'

This explains his charming reference to Lycidas."

Hammersmith, 24th June, 1859.

MY DEAR MR. FIELDS,—I shall be most happy to see you and Mrs. Fields on either of the days you mention; and as Thursday is the earlier of the two, Thursday, if you please, let it be. If you can dine earlier, I hope you will come to tea soon. If your dinner must be later, I can put tea and the "bit of supper" into one, for it is nothing but sandwiches and a morsel of cake. Or this can be done in either case, to suit latest omnibus; so that, at all events, we may have some hours together, and not feel hurried.

Your true reading of the text in "Lycidas" surprised me extremely, making me think that some account of quotations right and wrong, apposite and inapposite, &c., might form a curious article. Milton, it must be owned, might have accused his misquoters of attributing tautology to him in adding fields to "pastures," though the one word does not of necessity imply the other. I suppose the mistake originated in a certain vague feeling of the general greater applicability of the word *freshness* to fields than to woods, on account of the greater openness of the air in fields: though Milton by "fresh" evidently meant what he did by the word "new;" so we will have our revenge on him by accusing him of tautology *there*, and this, too, to give a rhyme to his word "blue." However, we will have a better revenge on him than that; for instead of his supposed fields, here are real fields for us in Spenser,

and those "breathing" too, therefore capable of a human application—

"With pleasaunce of the breathing fields yfed."
Faerie Queen, I. iv. 38.

What do you say to that? I beg you will both take it in combination, in return for the always kind expressions you use towards me; and as an anticipation, on my part, of the pleasure I shall have in seeing you.—Most sincerely yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

P.S.—Tea any time, from five onwards.

Hammersmith, 25th July, 1859.

MY DEAR MR. FIELDS,*—Though I take port when I dine out, which is a thing that occurs once in a hundred years, and therefore constitutes with me a chronological event, an epoch, an Hejira,—yet I am not in the habit of taking it, doubt much whether it would agree with me, and therefore am extremely cautious how I open a fresh account with the chance. So you must be content again, my kind friend, with taking my sense of your kindness for my acceptance of it. A good intention, where faith is to be put in it, as it is in yours, is itself a good deed, or to be counted as such; and I assure you I lay it up in my memory; for what makes a good deed, but the intention at the heart of it? So you may rest as satisfied as I am thankful.

You and yours, I see, have kind ears as well as faces. May nothing discordant ever reach them!—Most sincerely yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

P.S.—I have reasons for liking our dear friend Procter's wine, beyond what you saw when we dined together at his table; but I am obliged to be very cautious with his too.

* This note is in reply to one I sent your father from the Continent, in which I threatened to send him some port wine, as I had taken a glass with him at Barry Cornwall's table a few weeks before.—*Note by Mr. Fields.*

To Alexander Ireland.

Hammersmith, 27th October.

My dear Sir,*—Many thanks for your handsome notice of my play. Next to this your approbation of it, I was particularly pleased that Mr. Montgomery gave way to his fervour so properly on the occasion you allude to. I used to make Ellen Tree laugh, during the rehearsals of the part, by reminding Mr. Anderson that he was "*not to be indecent*, but to clasp his mistress right heartily, and as if the only thing to be ashamed of were his doing it by halves." For you know there is apt to be a cold suggestiveness on such occasions, which is the most indecent of all things. Ah, I wish everybody had understood the play as thoroughly as her fine nature did, or as that (let me proudly add) of the Queen did. I do not speak of the poetry, but of the heart and justice of it. It would have had a better fortune, but "thereby hangs a tale."

You speak of the emptiness of the boxes. There were so few *men* one night among the audience of Covent Garden, that the same charming actress wittily said, "those are all the good husbands in London." The same inequality of the sexes will perhaps have been observable in the Manchester audiences. If so, it might be worth your while (and edifying for *them*) to notice it. Madame Vestris, with an instinctive apprehension to that effect, wished me to let Agolanti have his wife back again; and said that, if I did so, she would undertake that the play would have a run of sixty nights. I told her that my conscience would not allow me; that I felt that I had a piece of legislation in my hands, the duty of which I could not give up; and that as the man was not to be divorced (for she

* Acknowledging a copy of the *Manchester Examiner*, with a review of the *Legend of Florence*, performed in the Theatre Royal of that city in 1859.

would not have a divorce in the play, as originally written), nothing remains for justice, but to kill him.

A Queen's opinion, however, may do much, in spite of conventional errors. How it happened that the *Legend of Florence* was not repeated at the Princess's Theatre, as other plays performed at Windsor, had been, I have yet to learn and even to inquire—so strangely incurious am I, and so much in the habit of waiting events; but I ought to have done so, and must, now that my *Autobiography* is to be continued. Strange things have been told me, but I have never investigated them,—not that the Queen had anything to do with them: Her Majesty (God bless the dear, warm-hearted woman!) has never done me anything but good and honour from first to last.

Perhaps you are not aware that after she had first witnessed the performance of the play at Covent Garden, the Queen, on her way out of the theatre, said to the stage manager, "This is a beautiful play you have given us to-night, Mr. Bartley." Bartley, with great good-nature as well as presence of mind, said to the Queen, "I think the author will be very happy, if I might repeat to him those gracious words of your Majesty."

"Do so, by all means," replied the cordial sovereign.

Lord John Russell told me, that Prince Albert expressed the same opinion of that piece. You are aware, I believe, that the Queen went more than once to see it at Covent Garden; twice, I know, but Madame Vestris told a friend that she went four times. She afterwards had it performed at Windsor; and *this*, I think, it might have been good for the Manchester people to be told in the play's announcements. I had thoughts of saying as much to the manager myself, in a letter to him; but living so retired, and ignorant of so many things which other people know, I am not acquainted with his name and did not like to address him merely by his office. Perhaps if you, or some friend of yours, have personal knowledge of him, you would be kind enough to convey my compliments to him, and state my opinion on the subject;—

perhaps let him have a sight of this letter. I cannot help thinking, knowing what an effect royalty has at all times, and how just a sympathy the people have with it in its present English shape, that if the manager were to speak of the play in his bills and advertisements, "*As performed by her Majesty's command at Windsor Castle,*" the result to the *boxes* might be good for all parties concerned.

With constant pleasure in reading, every Saturday or Monday (according as the postman chooses to gratify me), both your original articles (often plucking out the whole hearts of the questions) and the judicious and entertaining selections which you make from books, I am ever, dear sir, thankfully and faithfully yours,

(Signed) LEIGH HUNT.

To THORNTON HUNT.

3rd December.

MY DEAR THORNTON,—Observing that you liked my primroses yesterday, I send you one of the pots. I verily believe that the scent of flowers is of positive benefit to the faculties, mental as well as bodily; ergo, I expect you to snuff it up occasionally, on "principle." I cannot exactly say how the flower ought to be watered, &c., and should be glad to know if you can find out; but moderate watering is best for flowers in general—*i. e.* so as to *just* keep the earth moistish, and not to let water settle in the pan. And you know you must not have flowers in bed-rooms at night-time. Thus much about my twopenny-halfpenny present, in return for which I expect you to oblige me by *not* writing.—Your loving father,

L. H.

If it prosper, this kind of flower is invaluable for the abundant succession of its blossoms.

To Charles Ollier.

Hammersmith, 23rd April, 1859.

My dear Ollier,—As you tell me, through Edmund, that you cannot write just now, I have consented, like a dutiful correspondent, to receive the information at second-hand, looking to beloved old June to bring me my revenge; for how it is that you leisurely gentlemen, and possessors of fine sets of teeth, undertake to be ill in this incompetent manner, and expect a semi-toothless chap like myself,—*ergo*, one full of pains and indigestion,—to continue to write, nevertheless, as if he were not suffering under a hundred incompetencies of his own, is what I cannot very well discover. However, write I do, and shall, till you resume your pen. Meantime, I shall come and see, for myself, why you don't, as speedily as I can.

As the enjoyment of Nature and her beauties has so long been a common property between you and me, I must tell you of a singularly charming flower, which, though I am told has been long in England, was hitherto unknown to me, and the name of which, I believe, is *Dielytra*.* It blooms into the shape of as complete a *heart* (the ideal heart) as you ever saw, holding (as if in care) the germ underneath it in what turns out to be two arms. As the flower (which is rose, colour) increases, it *expands*, as a heart should do; and in the course of this expansion (observe this pretty symbolical process) *the two arms gradually turn up, and become a pair of wings, as if to set the heart rising to heaven.* Fond of flowers as I am, and full of intention as I believe all of them to be, beyond what is known to us, I really think this is the most interesting flower I ever met with. Dielytra means double-*spurred;* but this does not do the two mysteries justice: so I call it the Winged Heart, and order you and everybody else to do the like; and thus, you see, I can give my orders as

* It had just been brought to him by Miss Sophie R. Francis.

well as yourself, when I am in the mind.—Dear Ollier, orderly or disorderly, I am ever yours affectionately,

LEIGH HUNT.

To BENJAMIN MORAN.

Hammersmith, 4th July [1857].

MY DEAR SIR,—Having read your letter the other day in a great hurry, owing to some immediate call on my attention, my mind misgave me this morning, that it contained a query which I had not answered. And so it turned out! for which I beg your pardon. It was about the receipt of the newspaper containing the letter on Lapland. The newspaper I *did* receive; and I wish I could think the letter as good as the passage which I had seen out of a former one by the same writer. But the best travellers are privileged to write sometimes as if they were tired.

You are right about money-getting in the main, horrible as are the abuses of it, and provoking sometimes its predominance. Besides, it is a phase of things through which all the world must go, till they have all made acquaintance with one another,—and all interchanged their goods and knowledges: by which time it is to be hoped they will all have discovered the means and advantages of obtaining more leisure, varying the pursuit, and exalting its objects; for I suppose we are not to believe that the world is to go on through countless millions of ages precisely as it does at this or any other moment, merely because Jones trades with Thompson, and Smith is a pork-butcher.

I rejoice that you bore away with you so good an impression of our evening, especially as I was afraid I had talked too much, and so lost a good deal of what I had fully intended to gain from my visitors. But it was owing to the spirits in which they put me. However, gain I did, especially from yourself. —Most sincerely yours, my dear sir,

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 21st September, 1857.

My dear Sir,— . . . . Your account, my dear sir, of Mrs. Moran I read with the tears in my eyes, both on your account and my own. Ah, me! it is a beautiful but incomplete world. Who can refuse the hope of completeness put into our hearts by its Maker, and to be realized somewhere else, or at some future time? Her patience makes my tears come forth again, as I write.—God sustain her, my dear friend, and yourself, and all of us! prays yours, most truly and thankfully,

Leigh-Hunt.

Hammersmith, 3rd November [1857].

My dear Sir,—I should have thanked you for the affecting letter which I received yesterday, before the day was over, but was unable to do so on account of a visit on particular business from my son Thornton, which took up the time I had intended to devote to it. Your terrible bereavement was, in all possibility, not known to me as soon as it was to most of your friends, for I did not see the newspaper of the day in which it was first mentioned; and when I heard of it, I was in doubt whether I was privileged, by sufficient intimacy, to be among the first to condole with you; also, indeed, whether the condolence would have been desired by you so soon, the reverse being sometimes the case during the first paroxysms of grief. I had nearly, however, made up my mind to do so, and to give you the choice of leaving my letter unread, when you solved my doubts by paying me the compliment of treating me as an old friend, and opening to me a heart which had already made me feel like one towards yourself.

I do not pretend to combat with your first feelings of anguish. Tears only, and thorough acquiescence with them or rather encouragement of them on the part of a friend, can help you with those. It is an affecting, and would be a startling consideration, to think, that God has given us tears

for such express purposes of relief, as knowing how much our sorrows would need them, were not this very fact, among others, a proof (at least, it is a great evidence to myself,) that all other needs of our affections are destined to be made up to us in good time; for tears, though they calm the first outbreaks of affliction, do not suffice for its subsequent yearnings; and as those yearnings continue—often with great returns of anguish to the last—sufficingness, I think, remains in store for them also. I should be one of the unhappiest, instead of the most resigned of men, at this moment, if I did not constantly and, as it were instinctively, feel that I should rejoin all the dear ones whom I have lost—words, that now, as I write, wring bitter and unsufficing tears from the quivering of the soul within me. Encourage, my dear sir, and, as it were, throw yourself heartily into the arms of this expectation; think how worthy it is, both of man and God, quite apart from the dogmas which too often render both so much the reverse; and, meantime, act in every respect with regard to your dear one just as you feel sure *she would wish you to act*, weeping as plentifully as you need, but as patiently too, and considering her as only gone before you, to be rejoined: she, all the while, being delivered from all *her* pain, spiritual as well as bodily, because she now possesses that certainty, as a disembodied spirit, which, for some finally good purpose, it is not fit that we, who are yet on earth, should possess ourselves. For my part, I confess to you that I often feel it highly probable that the spirits of my own beloved dead are in the room with me, and that they feel a special and heavenly pleasure by seeing that I do so, and by knowing the comfort it gives me. I count this no kind of madness, but one of the heights of reason; for it does not unfit me for the common work of life, but, on the contrary, helps it; and as it neither fevers me, nor is caused by any fever itself, I count it not among the unhealthy, but the healthy capabilities of my nature, therefore, of anybody else's nature who chooses reasonably to enjoy it. For you will not imagine that I am arguing for the absurd inventions

and self-refuting vulgarities of what is at present called "Spiritualism."

With regard to what you tell me of those dreadful torments that were endured so long and so beautifully, it calls to my mind the noble conclusion of an excellent epitaph written by Pope on a sufferer from the same cause, and of the same heavenly nature. The passage will renew your tears, but not undesirably, nor without a divine consolation:

> "So unaffected, so composed a mind,
> So firm yet soft, so strong yet so refined,
> Heav'n, as its purest gold, by tortures tried—
> The saint sustained it, but the woman died."

My dear friend, I am most sincerely and warmly yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

Hammersmith, 24th June.

MY DEAR MR. MORAN,—I was truly ashamed to have been so late in returning the accompanying books and views, for which, nevertheless, pray accept my heartiest thanks, especially for the one of the latter on which my mother must have set her eyes. Often and often have I looked at it, thinking of the struggles of both our lives, till my own eyes seemed to fill with her tears and mine united. But the heaven she believed in, and merited, must be hers now.

Again I beg pardon for the delay; but diplomatist though you are, I hope you allow, on rare and very indulgent occasions, the admissibility of the maxim, "Better late than never:" a dangerous *prospective* maxim, I grant, but retrospectively, a very consolatory one.—Ever affectionately yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

To J. W. DALBY.

19th September, 1857.

MY DEAR DALBY,—Not having had the courage to read your letter through at the time of my receiving it, owing to cir-

cumstances which had more than usually softened me, I did not see your request in the closing paragraph till this instant, otherwise I would not have delayed writing. I am as well as I can reasonably expect to be, considering that infirmities of age seem to have been growing upon me of late faster than before, and that I now feel as though I belonged to the next world more than to this, however willing and even desirous I am to stay here as long as I may, for many reasons. Your letter, my dear friend, was not *painfully* painful to me, or such, at all, as I would rather not have had. Far, very far, from it. It only made tears flow, the close of which adds another balm to patience. May we all meet, as, thank God! I believe we shall, where all riddles will be explained, all wants filled up, and what is dark in this state of things be found to be the necessary retrospect and set-off to the brightness in the other. I cannot think that the Author of all good and hope does anything by halves in respect to that roundness of completion in a future state, which he has put it in our hearts to desire in this—any more than he has made anything which yearns or tends to be completed, a thing but half complete, from an orb itself down to a fruit. But, oh! how the heart often yearns and aches with the yearning, meantime. I am cheerful with friends, and patient, too, when alone, and write, though by dribbles, both prose and verse—the former because it is requisite, the latter because it is my great and constant refuge from uneasier thinking, long as I may be in turning the couplet or the line. I have indeed found poetry to be what Coleridge says of it, "its own exceeding great reward;" that is to say, in the composition of it. And I doubt not you have done the same, as soon as you found you could retreat in any way, and for what brief intervals soever, from those sorrows, of which I grieve to see that you, too, have partaken. But how can any man of sensibility escape them? Let us hope and believe that they will all become, by-and-by, what I have said. The name which had become associated with strange pain to me, whatever regret and protestation it expressed, was the first to leave itself at my door, when my affliction took place (you

know whose that is): his letters were never more cordial to me, or indeed even so much so as now: not a single other friend or valued acquaintance, first or last, has failed to treat me with every regard and respect; and the little parlour which you sat in has, just now, of his own motion, received a visit from a new one in the person of the amiable man, and admirable judge, the Lord Chief Baron, who reminds me that he was one of a club with me in my younger days, that met for the cultivation of public speaking. He wants me to go to his country-house at Hatton, and I can't, I have been so bodily unwell; but I am trying to be able, by jaunts in omnibuses, and rehearsals of distances from home on Richmond Hill.—My dear Dalby, with love to your loving household, and thanks for their remembrances of me, I am ever most affectionately yours

LEIGH HUNT.

To EDMUND OLLIER.

41, *High Street, Putney,*
19*th August*, 1859.

MY DEAR EDMUND,—I have been so unwell of late, that my kind old friend Mr. Reynell suddenly carried me off here to his house for change of air. I ought to have written to you two days ago, but was so busy the first day, and so unwell the second, that I took the liberty, in this instance, of treating *you* as an old friend, and resting in this silence.

You may depend upon it I will come and see you all in your new snugness as soon as I can. I shall only be too glad of that "can" for my own sake, and that of my health.

The *Atlas*, which at first came last, now comes first of all the weekly papers which I see; and I recognize, from time to time, the expressive hand of the poet.

I am very glad to hear what you tell me of Lady Shelley. I experienced a melancholy *contretemps* to-day in regard to her,—a letter coming to me to say that she was in town, but only till morning. I have answered her *at* her town address,

in case some chance may have detained her longer than she expected; and have expressed, outside of it, a desire that it should be forwarded.—Ever affectionately yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

To JACINTHA CHELTNAM.

Putney, 20th August [1859].

DEAREST JACEY,—I have been so hindered this morning, though not unpleasantly, and the dinner somehow got so late, which confuses the sense of time, that I can write but very brief thanks in return for your kind long letter of yesterday, and the parcel. Lady Shelley has been here, to consult me on a matter connected with her second edition; and she wants me to go down to Boscombe, and says she would come and fetch me. So I suppose I shall go before long, and gladly, too, both on Boscombe's account (*i. e.*, the people in it) and that of my health, but I cannot do so directly; and when I do, the quick post now-a-days will enable me to be often, by word of pen, with my dear child at Hammersmith, and so hear of her and hers. Else I certainly would not go to a distance anywhere.

The parcel was more than good in the quantity of things in it, except that you have sent Craik's *Knowledge under Difficulties* instead of his *Shakspeare's English*. But this will do quite well when you come next time, which, of course, I wish may be very soon, but not so as to tax your home conveniences or your pocket, for which last I need not say how gladly at any time I would pay. Your ever loving father,

LEIGH HUNT.

Kisses to T. for his flowers.

To LADY SHELLEY.

Putney, 24th August, 1859.

DEAR LADY SHELLEY,—I was very sorry for not having sent the papers, but my ailment is still upon me with great internal

pain, and I write this in bed. The medical man here, however, whose very face comforts me, for it is cheerful, tells me all will go well. So did your bright countenance the other day, smiling through its tears.

I rejoice whenever you and Sir Percy tell me I have given you any gratification. Pray do with the letters what you please—especially as I know you will omit the satirical passages. Sir Percy's "love" brought tears of pleasure into my eyes, and how could the pleasure but be increased, when you added your own?—With gratitude for both, devotedly yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

(Written four days before his death.)

APPENDIX.

SOME few of the letters which have been received too late for insertion in their proper places still possess in one way or other sufficient interest to be included in the collection, and they are subjoined in an Appendix. The first is the reply to a letter from Mr. Robert Chambers, in which, while expressing the most generous wishes for a paper that in some degree competed with Chambers's *Edinburgh Journal*, the writer took the opportunity of warmly asserting the claims of his elder brother William as the originator of cheap respectable publications of that particularly valuable class.

The letters to Egerton Webbe form part of a collection of unpublished writings which remain in the possession of our friend's sister, Mrs. Edward Holmes. Those addressed to Mr. Robert Bell are, like all that he has supplied to me, carefully elucidated by his own notes.

To ROBERT CHAMBERS.

4, *Upper Cheyne Row, Chelsea,*
21st April, 1834.

MY DEAR SIR;—I should have sooner acknowledged the receipt of your kind and flattering letter, had I not in the midst of a great press of business been answering it in

another manner through the medium of the *London Journal*, in the columns of which I have taken the liberty of putting it. I hope you will excuse this freedom, which I could not have taken with you had I respected you less; and I trust I have anticipated any delicacies you might have had on the point, by stating to the reader that you had given me no instruction as to whether I might use it or not. But, setting aside other reasons for this step, injurious, I trust, to neither of us, it appeared to me too good a thing for the public to lose, as an evidence of the new and generous goodwill springing up among reflecting people, and specially fit to be manifested by those who make it their business to encourage reflection. It would have been like secreting a sunbeam, a new warmth, a new smile for the world. Nor will you think this image hyperbolical, when you consider the effect which such evidence must have upon the world, however your modesty might incline you to deprecate it personally. Mankind, in ignorance of the sweet and bright drop of benevolence which they all more or less carry in their hearts, ready to bathe and overflow it in good time, have been too much in the habit of returning mistrust for mistrust, and doubting every one else because each of themselves was doubted. Hence, a world of heart-burnings, grudging, jealousies, misbeliefs, &c., till some even of the kindest people were ashamed to seem kind, or to have any better opinions of things than their neighbours. Think of what a fine thing it is to help to break up this general ice betwixt men's hearts, and you will no longer have any doubt of the propriety of the step I have taken, even supposing you to have had any before—which I hope not.

I forgot to say one thing in my public remarks on your letter, which was to express my hearty agreement with you as to the opinion that publications of this kind do no injury to one another. But this was implied in my address to the public in the first number, and I hope is self-evident. Most unaffectedly do I rejoice at hearing your own words confirm, and in so pleasant and touching a manner, the report of the

great success of you and your brother in your speculation. I cannot pretend, after all that I have suffered, not to be glad to include a prospect of my own success in it, however it may fall short of its extent. Any kind of a bit of nest of retreat, with power to send forth my young comfortably into the world, and to keep up my note of cheerfulness and encouragement to all ears while a voice is left, is all that I desire for myself, or ever did. But in consequence of what I *have* suffered, and conscientiously suffered, too, I claim a right to be believed, when I say, that I could rejoice in the success of other well-wishers to their species, apart from my own, and have often done so; and in this spirit, as well as the other, I congratulate you.

That you and your brother may live long to see golden harvests of all sorts springs up from the seed you have sown, and to reap in consequence that "revenue of pleasure" you speak of, as well as the mere ordinary one, is the cordial wish of, dear sir, &c.,

LEIGH HUNT.

To EGERTON WEBBE.

Chelsea, 18th February, 1837.

MY DEAR WEBBE,—I was coming to join your party. I should have been delighted to do so, had it been only to hear the playing of Moscheles, to say nothing even of your music, which I am most anxious to hear. If its genius be on a level with that of your "Surely it never was," you are sure of the headlong sympathy of the public. I only fear you may be sometimes tempted to be too learned. But why need I say all this?—I cannot come. I have a bad head, and a threatening side, and so much work to perform next week, ill or well, that I dread anything which may make me worse. Accept my truest regrets, and pray thank Mr. Rushton for his kind invitation, and say how sorry I am not to be able to accept it. Ever sincerely yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

Saturday, 4th June, 1837.

My dear Webbe,—With millions of apologies,—forgive me. I rejoice in Holmes, and in the justice done your father, and in yourself; but dare not trust myself with the holiday quite so *soon*. Have it, I must and will, but I have got an *editorship* dropt upon me, and am in a drive, beyond all conception, to get out my magazine for July! (the *Monthly Repository*, enlarged and animated). Pray come and talk with me about it, for you are among my hopes in the futurities thereof; and I want to show you what we are doing and speculating, and to tell you how the thing happened.

Would it not be possible to entice Holmes up with you some evening? I will have the piano tuned, in the possibility. Affectionately yours,

L. H.

Could you not come up *omnibus*-ically to-morrow evening? or any evening, but Monday?

Chelsea, 25th September

My dear Webbe,—How pleasant to be able to send you books themselves, instead of mere *responsiunculæ* thereon. Here is Mr. Chastes himself (Casti) *in propriâ personâ*—a rare occurrence for one whose other works render that patronymic a very *singular* plural. Item: with him comes his translator, who will give you the information you want at the page I have marked down, and whose version, I cannot help thinking, must have been suggested by the notice of his authors in the *Liberal;* though being a dandy bit of a gentleman, as I guess by the tone of the preface, and a Tory to boot (publishing with Hatchard), he could not, for all his better taste, and his relish of humour, venture to name so Jacobinical a production. Who he is I know not. His translation does not answer the pleasant hope excited by his preface; he cannot insinuate well enough the mixture of gravity and gaiety, of *dry* and *moist*, of learning and banter, of conven-

tional and unconventional, of tight mouth and lax collateral eye,—

"Quem Jocus circumvolat et Cupido."

(I hope here be a great many *ofs* and *ands*.) In short, he wanted you and me by the side of him, or, rather, in the head and soul of him. If this be a singularly modest observation, I think the dual number will carry me through with it.

Item: comes Frugoni himself, also marked down. Item: the number of the *Repository*, containing the passage you require, at the end of page 281.

It will be a great comfort if you come to see me before Monday next, for till that day I am fixed at home here every evening, and the sight of you would make me poke up my fire with a renewed vivacity. Thank dear Fanny for the addition of her signature (for by a certain variation of *lines* for *dots*, F- W- instead of E. W., and a little feminine misgiving, as it were, in the formation of the Roman capitals, I guess the initials to be really hers), and believe me, dear Webbe, most truly yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

Chelsea, Thursday, 3rd August, 1838.

MY DEAR WEBBE,—Most assuredly I shall come to you on Saturday, unless another day turn out to be more convenient to yourself. At all events, Severn drinks tea and lobster-saladizes with *me* on Sunday; so that whether he comes to you or not on Saturday, I hope you will come to him then—attended with the sororal suavity. Meantime, in the answer which you drop me to this, will you add a small *gutta serena* as to the hour of meeting? I have just been reading excellent brevities in *Monthly Chronicle*.* Ever truly, dear Webbe's

L. H.

Rest from pen and ink is doing me good.

* Egerton Webbe's article, *Virtues of Brevity*.

Chelsea, Wednesday [28*th August*, 1839].

My dear Webbe,—Albeit I dare not promise on Friday the like swift and instant ferocity as Holmes's advent ("immediately after breakfast"), the whirlwind of which will doubtless be felt by all the sitters indoors, and dash headlong at the clerks going to office (and yet, somehow, with pleasing dislocations, and a smiling, though gasping, recovery of the breath, as from a ducking in some honied waters); nevertheless, I will do all that lies, or rather walks, in ordinary humanity, and the possibilities of post-jentaculous reason, and come, with modest anti-climax, "as soon as I can;" which, seeing that you will be all assembled, will, at any rate, keep nobody waiting; and therefore I will fix no time, except in the horrible mind's eye of my own private conscience. Expect me, therefore, if you please, till I *do* come, each of you holding a bundle,—looking out of window,—saying, "Dear me! and 't. 't.,'" "how tiresome;" and occasionally, under pretence of my being so late, "having something." Only as Fanny is to "hate" the pie, I am afraid, upon the natural principle of contradiction, she will love it too well and eat it all. Therefore look well to her, for the sake of the natural *pie-eaty*, common to us all. I thought not of *Argus* or *Star*,* and kept back no "Thorntoniana," they not having been sent to myself till this morning. Will bring 'em with me in a state of generous indignation at the supposition, *and* damn for *self* and *friend*,

L. H.

My dear Webbe,—Alas! I am unable to see dear friends to-morrow (there is one comfort—I trust it will again rain horribly and *au reste*)—will *Sunday week* do for the regainment of our loss? You will see by the accompanying that I hoped to see you yesterday, "but the waste words returned

* Alluding to the *Glasgow Argus*, then edited by his eldest son; and probably the *Star in the East* of Wisbech, edited by a friend.

to me again," as Spenser says of the mumblings of Morpheus (very blasphemous to write, as I have done here, his sacred verse as if it were prose). Make room there, and proper space, all you Veneres Cupidinesque, and other elegant constables, who clear the way for the coming of immortal verses—

> "And the waste words returned to him again."
> Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, canto i.

Having now done my duty, and wishing I could chat with you for half-a-dozen sheets of paper, which I can't—God bless you, dear Webbe, ever says your faithful friend,

L. H.

Fecisti cogita ut "Cervaria Venatio" erat perdita super me? I unum longum cum vobis. Gigne ex. Ambula vestras calces. Scinde vestrum scipionem. Scit vestra mater vos estis ex? I et lava vestram faciem. Verte circum, e rota circum, et fac *justum* *sic; verte circum, rota circum, et sali Jacobinculum corvum. [*Inconcinna sane lectio, et inepta. Elegantissime cum Scaligero, Jano Dousa (super choppos) et aliis, *jistum* sic.]

To Robert Bell.

Chelsea, October [1838].

My dear Sir,—It was my full intention to go on with the Notes* this month, should the editors wish it; and as I find by your note that such is the case, I shall do it with good heart; only, as to the time, I should be glad if you would be good enough to name, not your very latest, but as indulgent a one, short of that, as may be; and I will engage that you shall have the article on the day you name.

With respect to the invitation to Chiswick, which you are so kind as to repeat, I am unfortunately, at last, in the hands

* *Notes of a Lover of Books* which Leigh Hunt was writing for the *Monthly Chronicle*.—R. B.

of the physician (who is, however, doing me good, so I should not use ungrateful adverbs about him), and cannot avail myself of any of the numerous invitations which my friends just now, with a provoking hospitality, have been conspiring to make me, to divers country shades, his own not excepted; but I trust the benefit I am receiving from him will enable me, before long, to go the whole round of them; till when I must shut the eyes of my imagination to the table of Chiswick. But I hope you will not think it impudent if, in the meanwhile, I ask you to come and see *me!* I was thinking of you but an hour or so before I received your letter, having resolved to put this question to you in consequence of the very kind and gratifying mention you made of my play in Sunday's *Atlas;* but I was obliged to wait till I could be sure of fixing my evening. The case is this: Knowles proposed to come and hear me read it, and the honour thus done me made me crave for more, emboldened by the opinions expressed by those who had already done so; I therefore invited Procter, Dickens, and others, who will all come; and I expect Carlyle, who is looked for every day from Scotland. Supposing the day, then, to be Wednesday or Thursday next, may I ask whether, upon the strength of these undoubted social attractions, and of your own expressed goodwill towards the play, I may look upon yourself as one of the party? I mention those two days, because I am in hopes of getting Webbe and Holmes to be here, before the former goes out of town, not being sure of him later—if, indeed, then; but I shall know in a day or two, and will write to you again, in case matters do not accord on all sides.

Will you allow me to recommend to your notice (and even presume to add my personal wishes and opinion in the matter, supposing, of course, that other circumstances would enable them to be received as a casting vote) the accompanying paper on Shylock, written by my friend Mr. Horne, the author of the *Death of Marlowe.* I know *your* opinion of that magnificent piece of passion, which, therefore, emboldens me the more to say what I do. He has permitted my greater expe-

rience in magazine-writing, to use a liberty in touching it, of which I have availed myself, not more, I hope, than becomes me; and you will let me say, that both the subject, and the way of handling it, appear to me eminently calculated to interest the after-dinner, over-their-wine-chatting faculties of the miscellaneous, Shakespeare-loving readers of a periodical, particularly so speculative a one as the *Chronicle*. I need not observe that the subject particularly suits Mr. Horne; the point mooted by it is, at the same time, new, as well as otherwise striking; and he is not such a writer, in any respect, as to be had every day.* Holding you, of course, not at all bound to abide by any other critical opinion than your own, nor to do more for me in the business than your admiration of my friend's powers, and your good-nature towards myself, would induce you, without any such particular application as the present, I am ever, dear sir, your obliged and sincere friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

Chelsea, 8th October [1838].

MY DEAR SIR,—Many thanks for your kind letter, and the promise of your company. I find (unfortunately for my hope of having Webbe with us) that I cannot collect my valiant and most friendly encounterers of my five acts from their various quarters, in town and out of town, for nearly a fortnight to come; so that at present I have fixed upon *next Saturday week* for our dramaticals. I conclude from what you say of the days of the present week, that that particular day would not be inconvenient to you. If my conclusion is right, will you be good enough to hold yourself engaged? If not, I will thank you to favour me with a speedy line, since I must compare notes with those who are coming, and take care to secure an evening convenient for everybody. At all events, you will hear from me again before the day.

* The article by Mr. Horne was published in the *Monthly Chronicle* for November, 1838, under the title of *Shylock, a Critical Fancy*.—R. B.

The 20th shall find me punctual; and what you tell me of your wish to have my contribution will, I hope, assist me to chat my best. I like, on such occasions, to imagine myself in company with some certain few, who all relish what we are talking about; and I know that these quasi claret-coloured bits of gossip about the good old time of wits and poets are as pleasant to you as to myself.—I am, dear sir, most truly yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

Chelsea, 18th October [1838].

MY DEAR SIR,—I find that, owing to my own thoughtlessness, I am obliged to put off the meeting of my friends for a week, or, perhaps, fortnight; for Knowles, who set it on foot, is forced to play every night at present in his new play, and so cannot come till he gets a respite. He is therefore to name a fresh night; and when he is able to do so, I will let you know it, taking care that it does not interfere with your own nights. I am at page 11 of the slips of the manuscript for the article, and shall be able to send it you, without fail, *on* Saturday, though I fear not before. Be kind enough to tell me, by an immediate line, whether this will do—that is to say, whether if put into the post here on Saturday, it will be time enough in reaching you next morning; or whether I shall forward it to any place in town.—Yours, dear sir, very truly,

LEIGH HUNT.

Chelsea, 2nd November [1838].

MY DEAR SIR,—I should be most happy to accede to the kind and flattering proposal you make me, and beg you to believe me fully sensible of the advantage to be derived from such a notice, and of the friendly zeal you take in my behalf; but ever since I wrote this play, I have been unexpectedly beset with perplexities about it in *every* instance, and the present turns out to be no exception, much as I should desire the contrary. I will explain the reasons when we meet,—

only assuring you meanwhile (what, indeed, can need no assurance) that they are anything but unfavourable personally to yourself and your proposal, and all the good and honour connected with it.

I shall certainly have another article for you this month, and you shall as certainly have it by the 16th; and so month by month, as long as you or the *Chronicle* choose to desire it,—most probably another "Notes," for it does not look well, I think, to cut short any *series* of articles at the second number. But I will endeavour to sprinkle it with as much seasonableness as I can.

Your wish for more of Mr. Horne came in delightful accordance with a proposal I was going to make you to that very effect; for he has commenced an excellent series of papers upon a very new and interesting subject—to wit, the *Collateral Characters of Shakespeare*, or such as are mentioned in the course of his plays, and have connection with the other characters, but do not appear in the *dramatis personæ;* such, for instance, as the curious people Justice Shallow talks of, Portia's father, Caliban's mother, &c. &c. Is not this a new and curious ground, a sort of new-found Shakesperian world, and most worthy to be mapped and characterized? Mr. Horne enters fully and with worthy subtlety into the matter, and I will undertake to say that any magazine might be proud of entertaining it. The characters are numerous, and would make a series of papers of very novel and universal interest.* But I hope you will see him himself with a specimen or two in his hand. What he has read of them to myself is admirable. I forwarded him what you said in your letter.—Ever, dear sir, your obliged and faithful servant,

LEIGH HUNT.

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* Published in the *Chronicle* under the title of *Studies of Undeveloped Characters in Shakespeare, from Sketches and Suggestions in his Plays.*—R. B.

P.S.—I now think of printing the play forthwith, and am writing another with an eye more consciously to the stage.

Your October number is excellent—solid, various, entertaining, and seasonable.

Chelsea, 17th November [1838].

MY DEAR SIR,—The author of the enclosed paper, writes to me thus:—"If the *Monthly Chronicle* would print my *Paul*, entire and signed, or with something from the editor equivalent in authenticity to a signature, I should be content; but I do not think it likely."

The secret of this is, that I had *offered* to *offer* it to you, thinking that it would form a very curious and interesting subject for the political gossips, especially now when Nicholas seems bent upon being so mad; and that Mr. Brown, in the late agreeable book on the *Autobiographical Poems of Shakespeare*, which was spoken well of in the *Atlas*, but in which he entered into a sort of quarrel with Dr. Lardner and his cyclopædia writer of the life of Shakespeare.* It appears to me, however (subject to your better knowledge), that the doctor would not be sorry (especially as the name of Brown need not appear, if you will substitute a word or two) to have the opportunity of at once proving his Christian charity, and consulting his profit (a very rare conjunction of possibilities!)—and that, at any rate, as to yourself, you would entertain the project with your usual courtesy and dispassionateness. The paper is certainly very serious, and *I* can answer, if necessary, for my friend's own veracity. A speedy answer, with return of the paper if not approved, would oblige, yours very truly,

LEIGH HUNT.†

Chelsea, 22nd January [1839].

MY DEAR SIR,—I have not yet seen the proof, but I have no doubt that all is right. I know what "editing" is, and

* The late Dr. Dunham.—R. B.

† The article was not published in the *Chronicle*.

always hold myself secondary to its necessities, provided the editor feels for his authors, as well as expects them to be considerate towards himself; and I know you do, and are very kind to my quips and cranks. I wrote that first portion out of a certain freak of ultra-conscientiousness, to which you must know I am occasionally subject; and for the like reasons I should be glad to use it still another time, especially as you encourage me to do so; so I will see how it can be got in, some ensuing month. Ever, my dear sir, truly yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

I am very glad you like my bit of *Ben Jonsonism;* for it requires something of his own confidence to take that glorious old boy by the beard.

The passage alluded to formed the opening of one of the *Notes of a Lover of Books.* It was omitted for reasons which it would be unnecessary to touch upon here; but as the author never had the opportunity he looked forward to of publishing it, the passage may be given with special propriety as a pendant to the letter. The reference at the beginning is to some observations on suicide in the previous article of the series.

"We hope nobody concluded from what was said in our last respecting suicide, that we meant to beg the question against every, or against any, catastrophy of that sort which came before the public. God forbid we should beg the question against anything, much less a calamity. All we thought fit to suggest was, that there should be no begging of the question at all, and that readers and writers of police-cases should be cautious how, in taking for granted that every suicide must have been ill-treated, they tended to confound the most justifiable instances of the misfortune with those that are less so, and encourage people of violent selfwills to distress, by their deaths, those whom their lives perhaps had made

wretcheder than themselves. Threats of self-destruction, with persons of a certain temperament, are among the common modes of extorting submission to their wills and tempers; and the least that can be done to check their being carried into execution (which they are much oftener than either party, perhaps, anticipates, in consequence of the immediate pressure of the will, and the desire at once to get rid of pain and to give it) is to take away this kind of premium in the public feeling for their continuance. But not the less, on that account, do we pity the first causes of these and all other calamities, whether well or ill borne, to which poor erring human beings are subject. We know too well how little the individuals have to do with these first causes, and how many of them, perhaps all, originate in physical as well as moral evils, or at least are greatly influenced by it,—such as a derangement of the organic functions, the pressure of a blood-vessel on the brain, &c., there being a constant action and re-action of mind and matter in these and all other cases, as may be seen by those who make the slightest inquiry into them, or have any acquaintance with such noble works of information as those of Dr. Southwood Smith,—the true, and first, and indispensably necessary foundation of all moral justice and legislation. But the unbearable sensations of the habitually gentle and unthreatening, should be distinguished from the impulses of those who have been in the habit of bearing nothing well, and tyrannizing over the more patient; and it is solely in order not to confound the distinction between the two, that we thought it our duty to put forth these remarks.

As to begging the question against the physically weaker set in favour of the stronger, the writer of these 'Notes' would think his conscience had arrived at an absurd pitch indeed of morbid delicacy, if he did not hold himself to be one of the last men who needed any disavowal to that effect. Very extremely the reverse are his notions on that point; and very impossible does he find it to agree even with a distinguished living writer on the Liberal side, that there

is anything like fair play seen between those who are said to be falsely called "seducers" and seduced; for though there may be little deliberate seduction in the world in the sense of that of Lovelace, and though seducers, like other absurd people, have a right to have their own first causes of error considered, yet if there is to be any individual moral responsibility at all in the case, and if the man (as the writer alluded to thinks) is of the strongest wit, his share in consequences that might have been avoided is manifestly of the greatest culpability; and this conclusion holds with double, nay, with an incalculably unequal force, if we considered which party it is that has to bear the horrors of these consequences. But in truth, we are loth to deny to any one the right of defending either sex as much as possible from charges against individual error, in a matter in which no half-civilized nation has ever yet seen its way to healthy and just conclusions; and how far we are distant from that title to a consideration, more tender to our [ ] than flattering to our self-love, let our own notions of our ancestors [ ] hundred years ago, and our posterity's notion of ourselves as many hundred years hence, settle between them. It is time enough, at any rate, for both the questions to grow a little less frightful and "delicate!"

1*st March* [1839].

(Congratulations on the coming of spring.)

My dear Sir,—I am very much obliged to you for stating to me your feelings respecting our friend ——, which were just such as I expected you to entertain. As to anything "new" of mine, respecting which you so kindly inquire, I am *again* making alterations in my play—I believe to its advantage—but these repeated delays of its appearance keep me in a state of great anxiety, and will after all, I fear, defer it till next season. "Patience," as the saying is; and it is a very good saying, too, as I have old reason to know. What is there

better, when one is really in need of it? However, I confess I would willingly vary it a little for a few years or so, and try what it is to *endure* a brilliant prosperity! Meantime, glorious old Mother Nature supports me somehow for the love I bear her—I mean, keeps me up; and I have had the pleasure of standing in the mud and dirt of February admiring the peeping of her new buds.

I guessed all about the article on skating, or very nearly; and you did just as I would have had you do, had I happened to be present. You are too rich in hebdomadal effusions, to subject yourself to the necessity of formalities with a friend, on such an occasion; while, on the other hand, there are dull readers, even of lively journals, who are not always to be told these secrets of common property, lest they should suppose in future the rich man had no property of his own! My dear friend Shelley, when I was not at home, used sometimes to help himself to one of my waistcoats, and walk out in it. Suppose a servant had ran after him, crying, "Stop thief." Ever heartily yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

P.S.—I grieve to hear you have been ill again; but the grief becomes of no very grievous sort, finding you are getting well.

Chelsea, 12th February [1840].

MY DEAR SIR,—I have much to say to you, so many feelings to pour forth in thanks to you for that criticism in the *Atlas*, so full of zest, and of such a length, too, struck off at so late a moment, that, like a bottle suddenly held upside down, the wine in me cannot come cut; and I have not, even yet, time enough to decanter it. Pray be kind enough to let the bearer know (or, if he misses you, to say by post) what days and hours best suit you to be broken in upon. I was coming this morning, having learnt from Mr. Wright that Wednesday was a good day, but was prevented. My messenger brings you a copy of the play, for your own "private

eating," should you be able to like the dish a second time. Meantime, dear sir, I am gratefully and most heartily yours,

LEIGH HUNT.

To MRS. ——.

Hammersmith, January 18th [1853].

MY DEAR MRS. ——,—My friend is very kind and considerate. Politics, like "misery," certainly make a man acquainted with "strange bedfellows;" but Carlisle and Hetherington were both, I believe, honest, sincere men, as well as Mr. Watson; and honesty and sincerity are always good public company. The only associate I should object to is Cobbett; because, though he suffered, he assuredly did not know "how to suffer;" and though he "fought," he assuredly *did* know how to run away, and though he beat me hollow as a political journalist, and I believe also did good to the cause of reform, it is to be doubted whether he was ever earnest in anything but selling his journal and finding fault. There are two men, however, long before your husband's time, whose names, if he will add them to his list, will refine and exalt it in spite of Cobbett,—and those are Gilbert Wakefield, the scholar, who was two years in Dorchester Jail for writing a "libel" against the war with France; and James Montgomery, the venerable poet, still living, who suffered in like manner for the cause of reform, while editor of the Sheffield *Iris*. There was also a Mr. Redhead Yorke, who wrote a book while in prison called *Mural Nights*; and Flower, you know,—the Miss Flower's father; but I don't remember the particulars of Yorke's "libel," or indeed of the others; and neither of their names perhaps would now be recognized—I mean known, which is a pity. Oh, there was a good stout set of us in those days, my dear brother John among the foremost; and so there is, no doubt, always, when occasion needs them;—good, grown, stubborn, jolly boys, who will not tell a lie, though Mammy Government does lock 'em up in the coal-hole.—Your affectionate friend,

LEIGH HUNT.

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